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MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
KINGS OF FRANCE  
OF THE  
RACE OF VALOIS

INTERSPERSED WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES

OF THE COURT AND STATE

OF FRANCE

THROUGH THE WESTERN, SOUTHERN AND  
INTERIOR PROVINCES OF FRANCE,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

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BY JAMES WEAVER, ESQ.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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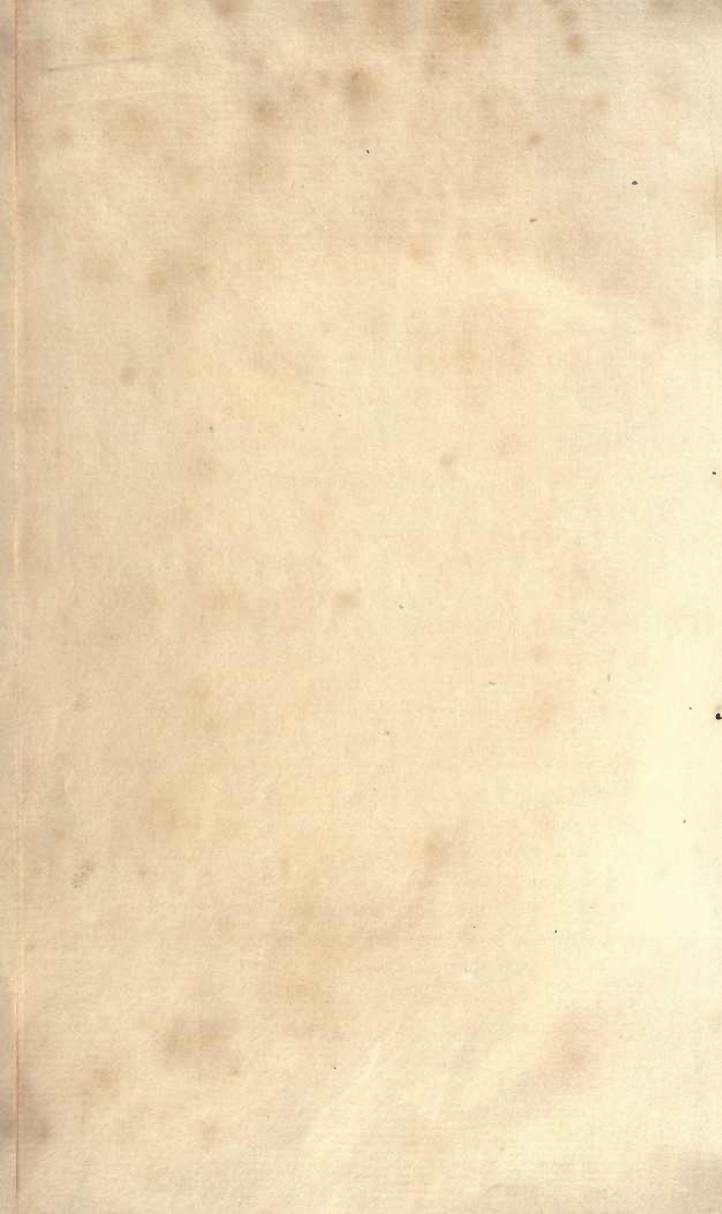
VOL. II.

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MARK LANE.





MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
KINGS OF FRANCE,  
OF THE  
RACE OF VALOIS.

INTERSPERSED WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,  
A TOUR  
THROUGH THE WESTERN, SOUTHERN, AND  
INTERIOR PROVINCES OF FRANCE,  
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

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By NATHL WRAXALL, Junr Esq;

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR EDWARD AND CHARLES DILLY.  
M.DCC.LXXVII.

# MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIVES OF THE

OF THE

RACE OF THE

SECOND VOLUME

INTERESTED WITH INTERESTING ANECDOTES

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A TOUR

THROUGH THE WESTERN SOUTHERN AND

INTERIOR PROVINCES OF FRANCE

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

BY MATHIEU WRAKAL, JOURN

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

PARIS

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THE circumstances in which Charles the ninth succeeded to the crown, were such as seemed but too indicative and prophetic of the future tempests which agitated and shook his throne. Scarce do the annals of any nation present us a reign so thick strewn with events of the

most calamitous nature. Religion, a sacred name, but prostituted and abused to the purposes of interest or policy, served as an ostensible pretext to cover the ambition, and other causes, which conduced to involve the unhappy kingdom in all the horrors of civil war.—An historian of sensibility cannot relate these disastrous facts, without tears of commiseration and distress. Battles succeed to battles in sad display. That inveterate animosity, that cruel and sanguinary spirit, which ever mingles in, and characterises theological disputes, actuated and inflamed the whole community.—The dreadful night of St. Bartholomew, stained with blood, and veiled in darkness, completes the mournful picture. It is a tale of woe almost unparalleled, and to which I early bespeak the reader's attention and compassion.

The young king, Charles the ninth, who ascended the throne in this critical and perilous juncture, was of an age too unripe and tender to interfere personally in the administration of affairs ; and could

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not, during many years, extend any effectual or permanent succour to the accumulated evils of the state.—Catherine, only anxious to lengthen the term of her son's minority, and her own regency, engrossed with projects for the enlargement and prolongation of that authority with which she was invested, sowed division and discord among the nobles. Ever opposing, with Italian refinement, one party to another—negligent of the public tranquillity, and solely attentive to her private aggrandisement—she sacrificed every consideration to her lust of power. The feelings of a parent, the ties which bound her to her own offspring, could interpose no barrier to this tyrannic passion; and Charles, from the moment that he conceived the desire of reigning without her aid, was regarded by her as the most inveterate enemy. As yet, she had not this event to dread. Francis the second's premature end placed her in the first post of government.—The states, assembled at Orleans, were opened by the chancellor  
with



with a mild harangue, breathing toleration, animated by patriotism, and exhorting to unanimity, and an oblivion of past dissentions. Counsels the most glorious and salutary, but unhappily impracticable amid the furious zeal of contending parties !

Some attempts were made to deprive the queen-mother of the regency, which she had assumed by a sort of political violence ; but Anthony's weakness, and her own address, over-ruled and extinguished these symptoms of opposition. She then prorogued the assembly, the deliberations of which, she feared, might tend to invalidate or diminish the regal prerogatives.

The court having retired to Fontainebleau, Louis prince of Condé repaired thither with a slender train,—Desirous to justify himself from the treasonable imputations cast upon him in the late reign, he demanded permission to prove his innocence before the king. It was granted him. The chancellor pronounced him

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guiltless of the crimes laid to his charge, and he was re-admitted to take his seat in council,

Undepressed by the elevation of their enemies, and the unexpected reverse of fortune which had befallen them, the princes of Lorraine kept their ground, without dismay. Supporting, and supported by the ancient religion, they yet preserved a prodigious influence, and spread terror among their opponents. In vain did the king of Navarre, though invested with the title of lieutenant-general, though aided by the constable and the Colignis, attempt to humble, and compel the duke of Guise to relinquish a part of his authority, as grand master of the household. He was himself reduced, after an ineffectual and impotent struggle, to renounce his pretensions.

Alarmed at so powerful a combination between the princes of the blood, Montmorenci, and his nephews, the regent exerted herself to dissolve a confederacy, which she feared might affix limits to her own  
con-

consequence. The constable hesitated long, uncertain and irresolute. His eldest son, Francis de Montmorenci, esteemed one of the wisest lords of the kingdom, and closely connected with the Hugonot party, endeavoured to retain his father on their side; but d'Amville, his second son, and Magdalen of Savoy, his wife, were of the opposite faction. Catherine, regardless what engines she made subservient to her measures, and anxious to succeed by any means, recalled Diana de Poitiers to court; and ordered her to try her powers of persuading and winning the constable. She succeeded: he declared in favour of the Guises; and an union of policy and interests was established between the duke, the marechal de St. André, and himself, which obtained the name of the Triumvirate\*.

The

\* This was the last public act of the celebrated duchess of Valentinois. She again retired, after this proof of her influence over Montmorenci, to the chateau of Anet. She survived it about five years,

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The ceremony of Charles's coronation, which these intrigues and disputes had hitherto delayed, was at length performed with the accustomed magnificence. This spectacle of pageantry could not in any degree heal the wounds of the state; and Catherine's perplexed mazes of conduct, which tended to sow jealousy and universal distrust, encreased and irritated them. Fearful that she might be oppressed by the superior and irresistible power of the three great united lords; and incapable of detaching them from their new bonds of coalition, she attempted to balance their political weight, by others equally strong. In consequence of this determination, she immediately made proposals to the king of Navarre, for a more close and intimate

and at length expired in the sixty-seventh year of her age. Her tomb is yet to be seen at Anet. She was the most wondrous example of beauty and empire, preserved even into the winter of life, which occurs in the history of time; unless Ninon de l'Enclos may be supposed to form an exception, and to have carried them to a yet more incredible length.



alliance between them. Anthony gladly embraced these offers; but while, in compliance with her promises to him, she affected to protect and favour the reformed religion, she secretly stimulated the constable to complain of those very innovations. Not sufficiently powerful to annihilate and compress by force the numerous parties, she substituted cunning and artifice in its stead; but her abilities, though great, and equal to almost every achievement, yet fell short of this purpose. After having fomented the sparks of civil discord, she vainly flattered herself, she could extinguish them at pleasure, or direct their fury. They blazed to the destruction of her son, and the ruin of his kingdom.

A feigned reconciliation, and obliteration of injuries, took place about this time between the duke of Guise and prince of Condé: they embraced in the royal presence, and made professions of the most sincere and cordial amity. The king of Navarre, in the assembly of the states,

was

was again so weak as to renounce his claim to the regency. Catherine, who intimately knew the human heart; who ever addressed herself to its passions, and conquered, by flattering its propensities; had enslaved Anthony by a new allure-ment, peculiarly calculated to retain him in her fetters—I mean love and pleasure. Mademoiselle du Rouet, one of the most beautiful maids of honour in her train, served as an instrument to fascinate and lull asleep the unhappy prince; and her ascendancy over a temper yielding, voluptuous, and indolent, was only extinguished with his life.

The states were opened with great solemnity. Charles, sitting on his throne, with the queen, and his sister the princess Margaret, on his left hand, was present at the debates. As the admiral Coligni had been principally and eminently instrumental to induce the king of Navarre not to contest the regent's power, she in return avowedly patronised the Calvinistical doctrines and followers. This pretended partiality,

partiality, the result of no conviction, but originating from the most profound political hypocrisy, was equally displayed at the colloquy of Poissy; a vain attempt to reconcile the religious differences; and in which the cardinal of Lorraine on one side, and Theodore Beza on the other, declaimed with warmth and eloquence, to defend their respective tenets.

Disgusted at the loss of their credit, resenting the preference shewn to the Hugonots, and covering their dissatisfaction at Catherine's conduct under the pretext of attachment to religion, the triumvirate quitted the court. Still, however, attentive to their great political interests, they exerted every seductive and flattering artifice, which might win the king of Navarre, and bring him over to their party.—The Guises first proposed to him, the divorce of his wife Jane d'Albret, and his marriage with the young queen dowager, their niece. Finding he disapproved this offer, they pretended to have received promises from Philip the second, of

of ceding to him Sardinia, in compensation for the kingdom of Navarre. Anthony, deceived by this ideal advantage, united himself to his natural enemies, and became the dupe of their artifices, in contradiction to his honour and real interests \*.

The

\* It is to Davila alone we can have recourse, amid this chaos of opposite and continually shifting measures, for any clear or certain explication of the sources, from which sprung the different actions related.—According to that great historian, who appears to have traced and pervaded, beyond any other, the silent and concealed workings of the heart, Anthony's change of conduct is not to be attributed, in any degree, either to religious or patriotic motives. Interest, ambition, and rivalry, were his sole directing principles. Indolence, and a pacific temper corroborated, and added strength to these. His partiality to the Calvinistical tenets had been shaken at the colloquy of Poissy, from the little agreement or harmony he found in the ministers of that persuasion, on the articles of belief, and reasons of dissension from the Romish church. He was offended with the behaviour of the admiral, who affected, and attempted to govern him in every particular. But above all, he was stung with the superiority and preference of his brother,



The voluntary retreat of the triumvirate had left Coligni undisputed master of the field. Catherine issued a new edict, favourable to the Hugonots. She even affected to regulate her measures by his advice, and shewed him every mark of perfect confidence:—but these encouraging appearances were followed by the most dreadful convulsions. Condé and Coligni beheld the coming storm. Wary and cautious, they already saw the queen's duplicity, and prepared to ward the dangers which menaced them. In the anticipation of those hostilities which they apprehended to be inevitable, they applied to the protestant princes of the

brother, among the Hugonots. The prince of Condé's open detestation of the Guises; his more impassioned courage and protection of them, had made him in reality the hero of their party. The king of Navarre's interests were likewise very different. He was the first prince of the blood, and might entertain no very distant or chimerical hopes of the crown. All these conjoined reasons account for his confederacy with the Guises.

Germanic empire, and received assurances of support.

Meanwhile the duke of Guise, at the pressing instances of his friends, set out on his return to court. A fatal accident which happened on the way, accelerated the rupture between the two factions, and began the bloody quarrel. While he stopt at the little town of Vassy in Champagne, and was employed in hearing mass, a crowd of Calvinists, assembled in a barn, interrupted and disturbed his devotions by their hymns. Some quarrel arising among the duke's domestics and the Hugonots, he ran eagerly himself to prevent it. In this attempt he received a blow upon the cheek with a stone: his attendants seeing his face all bloody, drew their swords, and killed above fifty, besides two hundred who were wounded in the fray \*.

The

\* If we may credit Davila, the duke of Guise was guiltless of any intention to injure or molest the Hugonots, while occupied in an act of their religion.

He

The prince of Condé immediately waited on the young king at the palace of Monceaux, to demand justice and reparation for the massacre. Catherine, distressed at this peremptory requisition, promised ample satisfaction to the prince. She issued an order to the king of Navarre, commanding him to provide for the safety of her son and the kingdom; enjoined the duke of Guise to repair instantly to her, unattended; and the marechal de St. André to set out with-

He says expressly, that these latter first commenced the dispute, by throwing stones at his attendants, who had rode up to the spot from motives of curiosity. The duke was exerting every effort to quell the disturbance arisen, when he was hurt on the cheek. This insult to their lord, irritated his followers to fury, and produced the massacre. When it was past, he summoned the magistrate of the place into his presence, and severely reprimanded him for permitting these licentious and illegal assemblies of the people. On his attempting to justify himself, by pleading the royal edict in favour of the Calvinists, the duke laid his hand on his sword, and replied angrily, "This shall soon cut the bond of that edict, though never so strong."

out delay for his government of Lyons. None of the three obeyed her mandate. Anthony repulsed the Hugonot deputies with threats, who were sent to lay before him their complaints: the duke replied, that he had no leisure to come yet to court, being otherwise employed: and St. André, more insolent, informed her majesty to her face, that in the critical situation of affairs, he could not abandon the person of his sovereign.

The duke of Guise arrived soon after at Paris, attended by twelve hundred horse. Terrified by his approach, and dreading lest he should, in conjunction with the other confederates, deprive her of the supreme management of affairs, the queen embraced a step the most pernicious, and replete with future miseries. She wrote to the prince of Condé, who had retired to his house, recommending to him, in terms so touching and pathetic, herself, the kingdom, and her son—adding, that the combined nobles held her in captivity—that she gave him a pre-  
tence



tence the most plausible and just to arm his associates.—He availed himself of these letters to excuse his proceedings ; but being as yet too feeble to oppose enemies so numerous and powerful, he withdrew a second time to his seat of La Fertè-Aucou, near Meaux.

The queen, meanwhile, accompanied by the chancellor, had carried the king to Fontainebleau. She beheld the awful picture of a civil war in full view. Her own ambiguous and interested policy, directed only to preserve the authority of regent, had greatly conduced to hasten and inflame this cruel scourge. She would yet most willingly have averted so deplorable a calamity. Her own interests made her wish to prevent the effusion of blood ; and conscious, that her junction with either party must be the signal of rebellion and hostility the most undisguised, she anxiously hoped to remain neuter, and hold the balance.—It was too late.—The duke of Guise, with a prodigious train, arrived at Fontainebleau.

tainbleau. — Catherine again summoned the prince of Condé secretly to her assistance. — She vainly flattered herself that his presence would restore her to freedom, and render her the common arbitress; — but the evil genius of France had decreed otherwise: all her machinations became abortive.

The prince appeared immediately in arms, and passed the Seine at St. Cloud, in his way to join her. — Though his forces were too few to terrify the confederates, they seized on the occasion to render themselves masters of the king's person, which they pretended was necessary, to prevent his falling into the hands of the Hugonots. The king of Navarre brought her this melancholy intelligence. Catherine hesitated: Anthony informed her, that he was come to conduct his sovereign to Paris, where he would be in safety; and added, with a sort of brutality, that “if she did not chuse to accompany him, she might remain alone.” He even allowed her no time to deliberate upon this

this important and definitive step. Charles, too young to oppose the violence offered him, turned towards his mother, as if to know her sentiments : she dared not utter a word ; and the young king, bursting into tears of impotent resentment and indignation, suffered himself to be conducted weeping to Melun, and thence to the capital.

No alternative, except open war, remained to the prince of Condé. Deceived, as he apprehended, by the queen, and his enemies in possession of the royal person, he deemed it too late to retract, or suspend his enterprize \*.— Galloping therefore

\* He was only at a small distance from the court, when intimation arrived of the Catholics having carried Charles to Paris. Stunned by this intelligence, the prince checked his horse, and remained a considerable time motionless, and silent. He perceived the critical situation in which he stood. All the troubles and disasters of the future war rose before his imagination. He had not yet passed the Rubicon.—While he revolved in his mind these considerations, Coligni, who had been behind, over-

therefore with the utmost expedition to Orleans, accompanied by two thousand cavalry, he rendered himself master of the city, after a vigorous opposition.

Conscious that the measure he had embraced was decisive and irretrievable, he proceeded to enact regulations of military and civil subjection to his followers. As in war only his future safety could be found, he neglected no precautions of a general, to ensure success. He was proclaimed chief of the party by unanimous consent. The pretext for their having taken up arms, was declared to be, the release of the king and his mother, from the captivity in which they were held by the triumvirate; and he immediately

took him. They conferred together some minutes. At length, the prince seemed to have taken his ultimate resolution; and, after a deep sigh, exclaimed, "Affairs are arrived at that pass, that it is necessary we drink, or be drowned!" So saying, he proceeded instantly towards Orleans.—It is Davila who relates these interesting particulars of the commencement of the civil war.

dispatched



dispatched messengers to the German princes, requesting their aid in the great cause of religion.

This conduct was the signal of revolt and sedition throughout the whole kingdom. The Hugonots, animated by their leader's example, expelled in many places the Catholics ; but their frantic and ungovernable zeal carried them to excesses the most horrible and sanguinary. With the frenzy characteristic of new and oppressed sects, they respected no edifices or professions, however sacred. With a brutal and ferocious rage, they exerted their vengeance even on inanimate and lifeless objects. The prince of Condé attempted to restrain these licentious practices, but in vain ; he was neither heard or obeyed, amid the fury of religious animosity and antipathy.

The chancellor de l'Hopital, who alone, in this tumultuous and melancholy period, preserved a steady and equal temper, yet labour'd to avert the tempest. He beheld France ready to be plunged in a

war, heightened by every circumstance of inveterate hatred. He hung over his bleeding country with a parent's and a patriot's sensations.—He prevailed on the queen to exert her endeavours for an accommodation. Catherine wished it with equal ardour, though from motives of a far inferior nature. She saw the prince of Condé already in possession of half the kingdom; she dreaded lest the confederates should imitate the precedent, and the king be finally left, between the two factions, without places, revenue, or dominions.

Stimulated by considerations so forcible to an ambitious mind, she undertook the arduous task. Not discouraged by ill success, and conscious of her own talents in negotiation, she made repeated and masterly essays to detach the prince of Condé from his party. More than once, her address and persuasions had nearly proved victorious. She allured him by proposals the most seductive; promised that the triumvirate should quit the court,  
and

and a general freedom of religious sentiment and worship be granted to his followers. Acting in person, and not thro' the medium of delegates ; mistress of all the winning arts which fascinate and enslave the human mind ; ever attacking the heart and its favourite propensities, she at length engaged him to give his word, that he would quit the kingdom, if his enemies consented to renounce the administration. The triumvirs, from whom she had previously obtained the same promise, instantly performed it, and retired to Chateau-Dun. Catherine summoned the prince to the observance of his agreement : he affected to obey ; and an interview took place between them at Talsy, only six miles distant from either camp ; where Condé made his feigned submissions to Charles and the queen. But Coligni, who reposed no confidence in her honour, and beheld the Hugonots in the most extreme peril, if their chieftain abandoned them, broke, by his remonstrances and representations, this treaty, on

the point of accomplishment, and led him back to his expecting partizans.

War, long protracted and suspended, now began in all its fury. The royal army, in which was the queen and her son, after having taken Blois, Tours, and Bourges, laid siege to Rouen. Montgomeri, whose fatal rencontre with Henry the second, has rendered him so famous in the annals of France, commanded in it, and made a most vigorous defence. A composition was offered him repeatedly, which he refused. Three times the queen, by the chancellor's entreaties, prevented the duke of Guise from storming the place; but as the besieged rejected obstinately every proposal of an accommodation, it was at length permitted \*. The city

\* Among the many great qualities which Catherine of Medecis possessed, and which are rarely found in women, was her courage. It approached to the noblest heroism. At the siege of Rouen, she went every day to the fort St. Catherine, where the most bloody attacks were made. The duke of Guise and the constable remonstrating with her on the danger to which



city was carried by assault; and the sack lasted two days without remission. Montgomeri, with a few desperate attendants, and a party of English whom Elizabeth had sent to his aid, escaped in a boat upon the Seine, and broke the chains stretched across the river at Caudebec.

Anthony king of Navarre found his death at this siege: he was wounded in the trenches, with a harquebuss, in the shoulder, on the day intended for the assault. His emulation with the duke of Guise, and his own courage, carried him ever into the most dangerous situations. When the city was taken, he caused himself to be carried by his Switzers through the breach, in a litter. The wound in itself was not mortal; but his attachment to mademoiselle du Rouet, and the plea-

which she exposed her person, "Why," answered she, "should I spare myself more than you? Is it that I have less interest, or less courage? True, I have not your force, but I have equal resolution!"—What grandeur of sentiment, had it been guided by principles of virtue! The soldiery gave her the title of "*Mater Castrorum*," in imitation of the Romans.

tures in which he imprudently indulged himself with this beloved mistress, threw his blood into a violent agitation, and produced a fever. The uneasiness of his mind inducing him to embark upon the Seine, for St. Maur, near Paris, he was seized with a shivering and cold sweats, which announced his approaching end. The boat in which he had embarked stopping at Andely, he soon after breathed his last.— That irresolution which distinguished him through life, equally accompanied him in death. He received the sacrament after the Roman Catholic communion; but his expiring professions evinced his attachment to the reformed religion. He ordered those who were around his bed, to carry his strictest injunctions to Jane queen of Navarre, on no account to trust either herself or her children at court; to be ever upon her guard; and to fortify her places\*.

While

\* Davila's account of Anthony's wound, and the circumstances of his decease, is somewhat different from that

While success attended on the royal troops before Rouen, the miserable kingdom

that of most other historians.—“ He had gone out to reconnoitre the breach, when he received a musket-ball in his shoulder ; which breaking the bone, and tearing the nerves, he dropped down upon the spot as dead.—This accident obliged the commanders to delay the assault. The soldiers and attendants bore him to his tent, and the surgeons immediately dressed his wound, in presence of the young king, his mother, and all the generals. It was their unanimous opinion, that he could not live, on account of the prodigious size of the orifice, and the depth the ball had entered.” He makes no mention of mademoiselle du Rouet ; but says, “ That the king of Navarre, not being able to support the extreme and violent pain he underwent, was resolute, notwithstanding the remonstrances and entreaties of his physicians, to go up the Seine to St. Maur, whither he was accustomed frequently to retire, on account of the purity and salubrity of the air. His brother the cardinal of Bourbon, the prince of La Rochefur-Yonne, Louis Gonzaga, and several other persons Catholic and Hugonot, accompanied him. He was scarcely arrived at Andely, when his fever, which the motion of his journey had irritated, increasing, he became delirious, and soon after expired.”—Davila mentions his unfixed and varying religious belief, even in the article of death. He ever  
speaks

dom became a scene of desolation, rapine, and blood through all her provinces.

speaks of him in terms of approval, mixed with compassion ; and says, that he was not calculated for the tempestuous scenes in which he was compelled to act a part. His candour, sincerity, and gentleness, were ill adapted to the universal dissimulation and fury, which characterised his associates in power. He adds, that his death happened at a time, when experience had so ripened and matured his judgment, that it would probably have produced events widely different from the ideas preconceived of him.

Brantome says, he was of a fine stature, and much superior, in personal dignity or appearance, to any other of the Bourbon race. He confirms his uncertainty and fluctuation between the two religions.—His two physicians were of different religious persuasions, and each endeavoured to influence the dying prince's mind and conduct. In compliance with the exhortations of the first, he received the Viaticum, and confessed himself at Rouen, in presence of the prince of La Roche-sur-Yonne. The queen coming to visit him, and advising him to hear some pious book read, he listened with great attention to the book of Job, which his Calvinist physician had brought. His name was Raphael Felliore ; and this man reproaching him with indifference for his tenets, Anthony assured him, that if he recovered, he would publicly embrace the profession of Lutheranism.—He died at forty-two years of age.

The



The contending parties, inflamed with civil and religious rage, were equally guilty of the most barbarous excesses. A minute recapitulation of these calamities would present a picture too humiliating to human nature, too affecting and horrible to a bosom of humanity. I suppress the painful narration. I draw a veil over this frightful prospect, where discord and death appear predominant, and shall return to the great actors we have left.

Louis prince of Condé at length took the field, with twelve thousand soldiers. He had determined, in contradiction to the advice of Coligni and d'Andelot, to march direct to Paris; expecting that the consternation he should strike into the inhabitants and the queen, would reduce them to terms of accommodation. In this hope he found himself deceived. Catherine, skilled in the subtleties of delay and of negotiation, engaged him in repeated and fruitless conferences, only calculated to give the Parisians time to recover  
the

the panic into which his sudden appearance had thrown them. While she tendered him fraudulent and deceptive conditions of peace, she seduced his bravest captains, and prevailed on them to quit his cause.—Condé, convinced how futile and dangerous were all the regent's offers, after several vain attempts upon the capital, decamped, and began his march into Normandy. The triumvirs followed close upon his steps; and, having come up with him by surprize near Dreux, an engagement became unavoidable.

The Hugonots had in the beginning the whole advantage. The impetuosity of their charge bore down all opposition. The constable, wounded in the face with a pistol-ball, and his horse falling under him, was taken prisoner; a part of their cannon was seized; and the rout appeared universal.—But the duke of Guise, cool and unmoved, had not yet engaged. He looked on at the battle with the most serene composure, and watched the moment to retrieve it. Though never possessed of any military rank higher than a captain of gen  
d'armes,

d'armes, his great and distinguished capacity rendered him more respected than the first commanders of the age. Seeing the Hugonot soldiery dispersed, and already engaged in plunder, he fell upon them, and put them instantly to flight. The prince of Condé, who disdained to turn his back, and was ever found in the front of danger, was surrounded, and made prisoner by d'Amville, the constable's second son, after having been wounded in the right hand. Coligni rallied his forces, and retired precipitately, under cover of the evening. He would have returned to the combat the ensuing day, but his German auxiliaries refused. He retreated therefore towards Orleans, unpursued by the Royalists, and carrying with him his captive Montmorenci.

The field of battle, and the whole glory of the day, remained undisputed to the duke of Guise. But if his masterly conduct in the action gained him the applauses of the court and adoration of the troops, his behaviour to the prince of Condé

Condé covered him with immortal honour. He received him with the most courteous politeness, lodged him in his own tent, and divided with him his bed. The prince himself afterwards declared, that during the whole night he could not close his eyes, while the duke enjoyed the soundest sleep by his side\*.—In this engagement  
fell

\* The most exact detail of this celebrated engagement is to be found in Davila. The prince of Condé's negligence, chiefly involved the Hugonots in the necessity of fighting; the constable having taken advantage of his security, and want of precaution, to pass his whole army over the river Eure by moon-light, the preceding night. Coligni first discovered this error and its consequences, of which he sent immediate information to the prince. Condé might yet have avoided a decisive action; but his great spirit would not permit him to retreat before the Catholics.—The admiral fought with dauntless resolution; and with his own hand laid dead upon the ground Gabriel de Montmorenci fourth son to the constable, and the count de Rochefort.—The Switzers alone remained firm and immoveable.—Davila attributes the whole merit of the victory, very deservedly, to the duke of Guise.—D'Andelot, one of the most intrepid chieftains



fell the marechal de St. André, one of the triumvirate\*.

During the commencement of the attack, as the advantage was totally on the prince of Condé's side, numbers of run-aways fled even to Paris, and published that all was lost. The duchess of Guise, who was usually attended by a prodigious

in the Hugonot army, had been necessitated to retire early out of the combat, by a quartan ague, which incapacitated him for any exertion of military skill or prowess.—The prince of Condé, all covered with sweat and blood, was conducted by d'Amville to the duke of Guise's tent. These are some of the most interesting facts of the battle of Dreux.

\* He was a polite and gallant nobleman, much regretted by his party. Brantome gives the minutest particulars of his death. The battle was already gained, says he, when intelligence arrived, that a body of 500 Hugonot cavalry had rallied, and prepared to renew the attack. St. André was mounted on a horse, which spent with fatigue, tumbled down in the onset, and had not strength to rise. At that moment, a gentleman on the opposite side, named Aubigné, whose estate the marechal enjoyed by confiscation, came up, and discharged a pistol-ball through his head, which instantly killed him. His body was not found till the ensuing morning, in a ditch near the spot where he fell.

crowd of courtiers and votaries, remained almost alone. The queen's mother, prepared for every event, careless of the fate of religion, and viewing every object through the medium of policy and interest, received the news with extreme composure, and only said "Eh bien ! il faudra donc prier Dieu en François !" — It was to her indifferent whether Condé or Guise ultimately prevailed ; whether the Catholic, or the Calvinistical doctrines gained the pre-eminence. When the succeeding day corrected the error, and brought certain intelligence of the victory, she from the same principles, was concerned and mortified. Her discernment made her foresee, that it established the duke of Guise's authority, and reduced her to a more compleat subjection. She notwithstanding endeavoured to conceal her feelings ; ordered fires to be lighted for the defeat of the Hugonots, and conferred upon the duke the supreme command of the army, with which his troops had already invested him.

Coligni meanwhile, on whom his army

had likewise conferred the post of general, passed the Loire at Beaugency; and having left his brother d'Andelot in Orleans with two thousand men, in expectation of its being invested by the royalists, marched into Normandy, where he might receive the queen of England's promised supplies of money and auxiliaries. The admiral's precautions were justly founded. Notwithstanding the severity of the winter, and the strength of the city, the duke of Guise determined to commence the siege. The queen accompanied him, carrying with her the prince of Condé, who was shut up in the castle of Onzain.—Though d'Andelot, one of the most gallant and experienced captains of his age, animated by the important charge confided to his care, exerted every effort of courage and military skill to defend the place; yet the superior genius and conduct of the duke had already rendered him master of the bridge and suburbs: nor can there be any doubt that Orleans must have surrendered in a few weeks, if the fatal accident of

his murder had not snatched the Hugonots from the imminent and unavoidable danger.

A gentleman of Angoumois, named John Poltrot de Meré, was the author of this detestable assassination. He was of the Reformed religion, which he had pretended to renounce ; and the duke had received him with his accustomed courtesy and liberality of spirit. Poltrot had long watched the favourable opportunity to give the blow. The duke of Guise used to go every day in person to visit the works, and inspect the advances made. As he returned in the evening, without his armour, only attended by one gentleman, and mounted on horseback, the assassin, who waited for him, discharged three balls into his left shoulder. Every medical assistance was procured ; but he expired at the end of eight days \*.

The

\* Davila is not very diffuse in his account of the duke's death. He says, the balls passed through his body, and that he died on the *third* day : but Bran-



The regent, fearful lest she should be suspected as instrumental or privy to his death,

Brantome, who served under the duke of Guise, and was at the siege of Orleans, has given the most minute enumeration of the circumstances of it. On the evening when he was killed, says he, only monsieur de Rostain accompanied him. He had just passed the river in a little boat, which constantly waited for that purpose. Poltrot immediately fled on discharging his pistol; and affecting to be a pursuer of the assassin, cried out, "Take him! take him!"—The duke perceiving himself dangerously wounded, only said, "L'on me devoit celle-la; mais je crois que  
"ce ne sera rien." They carried him to his own quarters.

Brantome, though devotedly attached to the house of Guise, yet does not absolutely accuse the admiral as the author, or concealed perpetrator of his death. He only drops ambiguous intimations, that he knew Poltrot's designs, without exposing himself to the infamy of a discovery, in case of his seizure. He however pretends, that the duke himself suspected Coligni, and pardoned him when expiring.—Davila says, that the admiral and Theodore Beza were universally believed to have persuaded Poltrot to commit this crime. They constantly denied the charge, and dispersed long justifications of their innocence over all Europe: but it did not erase, or obliterate the

death, caused herself to be interrogated in his chamber, before his own family, and a number of the nobility. Poltrot had endeavoured to secure himself by flight; but after having wandered the whole night in the woods, on horseback, he found himself in the morning at the bridge of Olivet, only a league from Orleans. Spent with fatigue, he entered a house with intent to repose himself, and was there taken by one of the duke's secretaries.

When questioned with respect to the motives that had urged him to the perpetration of so foul and dastardly a crime; apprehension of their guilt from the minds of the Catholics, and the house of Guise.

I cannot quit the subject of Francis duke of Guise, without mentioning a circumstance of him, that marks the truest magnanimity, clemency, and patriotism—When previous to the storm of the breach at Rouen, he harangued his soldiery, and put himself at their head, he ardently recommended to them three things—to respect the chastity and honour of the women—to spare the lives of every Catholic without distinction—and, to shew no mercy, or quarter to the English auxiliaries, their ancient and inveterate enemies.

he declared it to be religious zeal. As to the instigators of it, he accused several, but without uniformity; among others the admiral. Coligni highly resented and denied the imputation, which must stigmatize him with indelible infamy to his own adherents, and to the latest posterity. He demanded of the queen, that the criminal's punishment should be delayed till they could be personally confronted. These justifications and solemn protestations did not, however, convince the family of Guise of his innocence. Henry, son to the expiring duke, and then in very early youth, vowed an immortal hatred; and imprecated vengeance on the admiral's head, as his father's murderer. He satiated this unrelenting desire of revenge many years after.

The duke of Guise, conscious that his end approached, prepared himself for it, as became a hero. That magnanimous and exalted intrepidity, that mild and equal serenity of temper, which had shone eminently in his life, was equally visible in

his dying moments. Mindful of his honour, and desirous to clear his conduct from the aspersions cast upon it, he vindicated himself from any intention to commit the massacre of Vassy; and lamented in terms the most pathetic, that unhappy event, which had lighted up the destructive flame of civil discord. With earnest entreaties, he implored the queen, as the common mother of her people, to terminate the quarrels which desolated France; and pronounced the man an enemy to his country and his sovereign, who should offer her any other counsel.

The funeral honours paid him after death, were scarce less than royal. They are equalled by nothing in the French annals, except those which Turenne received a century afterwards. His body was carried in melancholy pomp to the Chartreux at Paris, and thence to "Notre-Dame," where he lay in state. Immense crowds of weeping citizens followed the procession. He was ultimately deposited with his ancestors at Joinville.

Poltrot



Pol trot was adjudged by the parliament to suffer the same punishment inflicted on traitors or regicides, and was torn in pieces by wild horses. At his execution, it is said, he still accused the admiral, as privy to the commission of the crime: and though the whole tenour of Coligni's life and conduct seem to combat and refute this horrible imputation; though a candid and impartial mind must refuse to admit so invalid a testimony, yet we know what degrading and unnatural violations of honour, rectitude, and justice, the spirit of religious zeal, however glorious or laudable, when irritated by persecution, can induce us to commit.

Francis duke of Guise appears to have been one of the greatest characters of the age in which he flourished, whether regarded as a warrior or a statesman. His errors, his vices and faults were even more the result of situation than of sentiment: and his towering ambition, though not justified, is yet palliated and diminished by the sublime qualities he possessed from

from nature, and the peculiar circumstances which gave scope and exertion to them. His death must certainly be considered as a misfortune to France; since he alone imposed some limits to the restless and intriguing genius of Catherine, now freed from all constraint, and without a rival in authority.

The queen evinced her deference to the duke of Guise's advice, by the immediate overtures she made of a pacification. It was soon concluded, by the mediation of the constable and prince of Condé, on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; though the admiral, on his arrival from Normandy, reproached the prince in very severe expressions for his hasty compliance, at a juncture when their great adversary's death gave them reason to expect a reverse of fortune.

Orleans was evacuated by the Calvinist troops; and the seigneur de la Cipierre, one of the most accomplished, virtuous, and amiable lords in the kingdom, appointed governor of the city. He was al-  
ready

ready in possession of a post, perhaps the most arduous, important, and weighty, which could be entrusted to any subject; that of tutor and preceptor to the young king. No man was more calculated to execute its high duties. He endeavoured to instil the most elevated and glorious sentiments into his royal pupil; and he would probably have inspired Charles, who possessed lively parts and quick perception, with the love of virtue, and the feelings of a great monarch;—but his death, untimely, and before these noble seeds could sink deep into Charles's bosom, deprived his country of so inestimable a treasure. All the miseries of this unhappy reign, all the dreadful crimes which stain its bloody archives, are probably to be imputed to this lamented event.

Albert de Gondi, marechal de Retz, a Florentine, and devoted creature of Catherine, was placed by her in the charge which La Cipierre had occupied.—Destitute of principle, profligate and dissolute in his manners, cruel from temper, dissembling,

bling, and master of every little art of fordid policy, he corrupted and perverted the many shining and sublime qualities with which nature had liberally endowed the king. The wretched prince, educated in a school of the most abandoned vice, and initiated into maxims of a tendency the most pernicious, was ruined while yet in early childhood; and all the expectations to which he had given birth, were defeated and rendered abortive.

During the tranquillity which succeeded to the late troubles of the state, Catherine, with her usual duplicity, endeavoured to sow distrust and jealousy between the prince of Condé and Coligni. To the former she tendered the same fallacious proposals, which she had used with so much success to Anthony his brother: But Louis, more wise and penetrating, could not be dazzled or deceived by her offers; and she vainly attempted to dissolve the intimate connection which subsisted between the admiral and himself.

The prince of Condé, gallant and amorous,



rous, was more assailable on the side of love, than policy. No nobleman of the court had received proofs so flattering of female attachment, or was more acceptable to women. Margaret de Lustrac, widow of the marechal de St. André, long disputed the possession of his heart, with Isabella de la Tour de Turenne, known under the name of “La Belle de Limeüil.” Each of these contending rivals gave him the most romantic testimonies of their love. The first presented him with her estate and castle of St. Valeri, magnificently furnished. The latter carried her passion yet farther—and sacrificed to him her chastity and honour. She was even brought to bed in the queen’s wardrobe: and Catherine, to whom she was distantly allied, and to whom she belonged as a maid of honour, ordered her to be conducted to a convent\*.

The

\* Almost all the French writers have been very minute and circumstantial in the relation of this singular story. Even Davila did not deem it unworthy a recital.—“It was Catherine’s grand system of policy,” says

The admiral, who was conscious that these irregularities in the chief of his party says he, “ at the termination of the first civil war, “ to dissolve the prince of Condé in dissolute delights, and all those effeminate pleasures which “ might insensibly enervate his mind, and imperceptibly diminish the natural activity of his disposition. She endeavoured, by honours and ample “ possessions, to give him a distaste for the fatigues of “ a camp. To this end, she prompted and encouraged “ the maréchale de St. André, who inherited from “ her father and husband prodigious riches, to attempt the prince’s heart: but though he accepted “ her splendid present, he despised her person, and “ remained unassailable by all her benefits.”—To mademoiselle de Limeuil he was more deeply attached; and Davila makes no scruple to declare, that Catherine was not ignorant, though she affected to be so, that he had obtained from her the last favours.—It is said, his wife Eleanor de Roye died a martyr to her jealousy and chagrin at her husband’s amours.—Mademoiselle de Limeuil was married afterwards to Geoffry de Causac, seigneur de Fremon.

The prince of Condé’s gallantries and libertinism gave occasion to the following “ Vaudeville,” or satirical sonnet.

“ Ce petit homme tant joly,  
 “ Toujours cause, et toujours rit,  
 “ Et toujours baise sa mignonne :  
 “ Dieu garde de mal le petit homme !”

ty, reflected a disgrace on all its adherents; and who dreaded lest some one of the prince's amours might prove too strong for the less tender ties of ambition or religion; remonstrated with him so forcibly, on the pernicious consequences of his continual engagements and gallantries, that he prevailed on him to put an end to them by a second marriage with Frances sister to the duke of Longueville.

The Catholics and Hugonots, forgetting their inveterate animosities, and animated by the love of their common country, joined to retake Havre-de-Grace from the English, to whom it had been ceded during the war. It was soon surrendered, and followed by a final accommodation between the crowns.

Catherine, who had long amused the prince of Condé, with promises of admitting him to a participation of the government, and who knew not how longer to exclude him, determined on a singular manœuvre. The chancellor de l'Hopital, who

who had withdrawn from court during the league of the triumvirate, but whom the regent had again recalled, was the author and adviser of it. The young king entered at this time into the fourteenth year of his age. By the famous edict of Charles the fifth, it was necessary that he should have compleated the year, before he attained to majority: but as the queen, by the declaration of his being no longer a minor, knew that she should retain unmolested the supreme power in her son's name, she procured it to be registered in the parliament of Rouen. That of Paris refused to receive or confirm this act; but Charles, instructed by his mother, reproved them in terms, so peremptory and severe, for their audacious temerity, that after a considerable delay, it passed the assembly.

Magnificent in all her plans, the queen caused the palace of the Tournelles, in which her husband Henry the second had expired, to be demolished; and erected in its place, the splendid one of the Tuilleries.



ries. She employed in its construction the most celebrated architects of the age, and rewarded them as became a sovereign, with the noblest liberality. All the branches of polite letters felt her patronage. Italy, her native country, was ransacked to enrich and adorn that over which she reigned. She prided herself on an imitation of, and unbounded reverence to the memory of Francis the first, in whose court she had spent her early years. Elegant and luxurious in her taste; refined and delicate in all her projects or enterprizes, beyond the genius of the century in which she flourished; Catherine of Medecis forms one of the most wondrous and extraordinary characters, to be found in the annals of mankind.

The continual and incessant complaints made by each party, of the infringement of the peace, strongly evinced its precarious duration, and feeble nature. The family of Guise loudly demanded justice against Coligni, as the supposed author of the late duke's assassination. A contest

between Francis de Montmorenci, the constable's eldest son, who was governor of Paris, and the cardinal of Lorrain, had nearly lighted up again the fatal brand of civil commotion throughout the kingdom.

The queen therefore, from motives not easily ascertained, resolved to carry her son on a progress through his dominions. It was supposed, that a principal inducement to this journey, was to form an estimate of the Hugonot forces and real strength, by an exact inspection in person. Henry duke of Anjou, Charles's eldest brother, and Margaret his sister, afterwards queen of Navarre, accompanied their mother. After having visited Sens, and Troyes in Champagne, they arrived, by the southern provinces of France, at Bayonne. Here took place the celebrated interview between her and the queen of Spain, Isabella her daughter. This latter princess was conducted by a splendid train, at the head of which was the duke of Alva, and the count de Benevento.

The

The duke of Anjou, with a number of the young nobility, passed the frontier, and met his sister at Arnani, in Spanish Navarre. Catherine, from impatience to embrace her favourite and beloved daughter, crossed the river Bidassoa, which separates the two kingdoms. On the opposite side, Isabella was met by the king himself, who gave her his hand to conduct her out of the boat.

The young queen was received with prodigious pomp at Bayonne. This interview lasted above three weeks. Every beautiful and brilliant entertainment, every gallant and noble diversion, which Catherine's fertile genius and uncommon capacity could invent or assemble, was exhibited to testify her joy on this re-union, and to inspire the Spaniards with the highest ideas of the magnificence of her court. Pleasure seemed to engross all present, and to have banished from this scene of festivity the more ferocious passions; but it was the queen's peculiar policy to cover her schemes of ambition or ven-

geance under the mask of dissipation. A gallery of wood, constructed to join the house in which she resided, with her daughter Isabella's, served to facilitate the secret conferences, which it is said she held with the duke of Alva, on the subject of reducing and extirpating the Hugonots. Some uncertain and ambiguous informations of this dreadful coalition and confederacy for their destruction, were circulated abroad. Catherine's character and conduct confirmed the suspicion. Distrust, mingled with terror and alarm, succeeded; nor could any caresses of the king or court dispel their apprehensions. On Charles's return from this progress, which had lasted near two years, a constrained reconciliation, void of mutual forgiveness, took place between the admiral and the family of Guise; and was followed by another, not more sincere, between the cardinal of Lorraine and the marechal de Montmorenci.

New sources of war disclosed themselves every day. The edicts of toleration and protection, repeatedly issued in fa-

vour



your of the Reformed religion, were violated in all the provinces with impunity. The government encouraged indirectly these proceedings, and extended no redress to the grievances of the Calvinists. They carried their complaints of these infractions and oppressions to the admiral and prince; but it was long before either of the chiefs could be induced to resume the sword. The latter yet hoped to be constituted lieutenant-general of the kingdom, as the king of Navarre had been; and both peculiarly dreaded to impress their young sovereign, now advancing fast to manhood, with sentiments unfavourable and hostile to them. They twice dismissed the delegates sent by their adherents; after having advised and enjoined them, rather to submit to any indignities or persecutions, than to have recourse to so dreadful a remedy as rebellion, and a renewal of the calamities of which they had already been witnesses: but the intimation which they soon afterwards received, that it was determined to

seize on them both ; to retain the prince in perpetual prison, and put Coligni to death ; necessitated them to more decisive and vigorous measures. D'Andelot, fearless and intrepid, counselled instant war, the most open and declared. His remonstrances prevailed ; and it was resolved to gain possession of the king's person, which could be only effected by cutting the Swiss guards in pieces, who attended on and protected him \*.

This

\* Brantome, who was certainly well informed in the court intrigues, declares the war to have been entirely caused by the prince of Condé's disappointed ambition. He had long flattered himself with the lieutenancy of the kingdom: Catherine, unable longer to delude him with promises, tutored her favourite son Henry, and inspired him with the desire of filling this high office. At a supper in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez, the young prince most severely and haughtily reprimanded Condé for his audacity, in presuming to emulate a post, which he had resolved to possess himself. Brantome says he was present, and heard the conversation. Condé perceived from what hand the blow came : He saw all his expectations blasted : He beheld himself duped by the queen, and sought for revenge by unsheathing the sword.

The

This enterprize was not difficult. Charles, with the queen his mother, was at the palace of Monceaux, where he held a grand chapter of the order of St. Michael. The Switzers, dispersed in the surrounding villages, might have been separately surprized, and put to the sword : but Catherine having received intelligence of their

The writer of Louis duke of Montpensier's life asserts the same fact, and Davila confirms it.

This last historian, with his usual impartiality and discernment, has laid open, with prodigious exactitude, the many latent principles of internal discord which produced these second civil broils. He accuses the partizans of both religions with being principally accessory to it, by their reciprocal injuries, turbulence, and antipathy. He attributes it to the young king's high and unconcealed resentment of the Hugonots' presumption and encroaching spirit—to the prince of Condé's ambitious and restless temper, incapable of repose—to the terrors of the Calvinists at the supposed schemes for their destruction planned at Bayonne—to Coligni and d'Andelot's haughty and unsubmitting temper—to Catherine's hypocrisy and dangerous dissimulation—to the cardinal of Lorrain's counsels.—All these conjoined causes, acting on minds already inflamed with mutual animosity, and incapable of being restrained or extinguished, again involved the kingdom in new commotions.

approach, and suspecting their intentions, retired hastily with her son into the town of Meaux. She then dispatched the marechal de Montmorenci with some deceptive proposals, while the Switzers assembled for the king's defence.

A council was held, on the measures requisite to be pursued in this critical dilemma. The constable, cautious, and provident of his royal master's safety, wished not to expose him to the hazard of an uncertain combat. The chancellor, touched by the great and salutary considerations of the public tranquillity; and conscious that the young king would be irritated to the highest degree by so audacious an attempt, which must infallibly produce a second civil war more cruel and inveterate than the first, joined Montmorenci in advising to remain at Meaux. Unhappily for France, the cardinal of Lorraine opposed these lenient counsels, and prevailed. At the break of day Charles quitted the city, environ'd by the Switzers, in the centre of whom he was placed,



placed. Before they had advanced two leagues, the prince of Condé appeared in fight with near five hundred horse. The constable, dreading the shock of so determined a body, commanded by such leaders; and rendered distrustful by age, sent the king forward with only two hundred cavalry by a private road, and he arrived safely at Paris the same evening. Condé, who was ignorant of this prudent step, charged the Switzers repeatedly, but in vain. They sustained the attack unmoved; and after having harrassed them a considerable way, he retired\*.

### Ineffectual

\* Davila's account of the enterprize of Meaux is somewhat different from that of Mezerai, and most of the other French historians.—He attributes the advice of marching to Paris, not to the cardinal of Lorraine, but the duke of Nemours. He adds, that the constable's opinion would notwithstanding have prevailed, if Fifer, general of the Switzers, had not requested to be admitted to the young king's presence, and assured his majesty, that his troops would open him a passage through the enemy, with the point of their pikes, if he would entrust his person to their pro-

Ineffectual conferences succeeded. Both parties, inflamed with animosity, were incapable of listening to the mild voice of peace: and the Hugonots, though few in number, having attempted to block up and distress the capital, Montmorenci, though reluctant, yet compelled by the murmurs of the Parisians, marched out to give them battle.—The prodigious inequality of numbers insured him the victory; but the glory of the day remained to Condé and Coligni, who, with a hand-

protection.—This offer was embraced. The march began at day-break. Charles, the queen-mother, the foreign ambassadors, and all the ladies of the court, were received into the midst of the Swiss battalion. The count de la Rochefoucault, and Andelot, having joined the prince of Condé and admiral, they made a furious attack on the rear, but were received on the Swiss pikes with wondrous intrepidity. The king gallantly spurred on his horse to the foremost ranks, followed by all the noblemen who attended him. When he arrived safe in the capital, the Parisians shed tears of joy. The whole merit of this action and escape was due to the bravery of the Switzers.

ful

ful of troops, 'could venture to face a royal army, so much superior \*.

The engagement was fought in the plains of St. Denis, and was rendered famous by the constable's death. He exerted, during the action, all the courage of a young foldier. Wounded in five places, he yet maintained his intrepidity. Robert Stuart, the same of whom I have already made mention, discharged a ball into his reins, which proved mortal.—

\* The action, says Davila, began about noon. The superiority of the Hugonots in cavalry, chiefly contributed to their success in the commencement of it. The prince of Condé was opposed to the constable's division, which he entirely routed. His horse was killed under him; and he, with great difficulty, recovered another. Coligni commanded the van on that day; and being mounted on a fiery Turkish horse, was once so much engaged among the enemy, that he narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. D'An-delot, who had been stationed on the other side the Seine, could not join his friends in time to be present at the battle.—The Hugonots took the advantage of a very dark and rainy evening to retreat; and the Catholics, though victorious, yet did not pursue them, on account of the loss of their general.

Even

Even then, he had the vigour to drive the pommel of his sword into Stuart's mouth, with which he beat out several of his teeth. His son, d'Amville, rescued, and disengaged him from the enemy. Fainting from loss of blood, he sunk down upon the ground; but the first use he made of his speech, when recovered, was to demand if there yet remained enough day to pursue the Hugonots. It was long before he would permit himself to be carried off the field, on which he obstinately resolved to die.—“ Tell the  
 “ king and queen,” said he, “ that I ex-  
 “ pire with the highest pleasure in the  
 “ discharge of the great duties I owe  
 “ them; and that I have at length found  
 “ that honourable end, which I have  
 “ fought under their predecessors in so  
 “ many battles !”—Yielding to the importunate solicitations of his sons and surrounding friends, he suffered himself to be brought to Paris. Charles and his mother visited him, and wept his end. A cordelier tormenting him with admonitions



tions and exhortations, he besought him to cease those needless remonstrances. “Dost thou imagine,” said the constable, turning himself towards him with a serene countenance, “that I have lived to “near fourscore years, without having “learned to die a quarter of an hour?”

In him expired the last remaining obstacle to Catherine’s authority. She saw herself delivered from every rival who could oppose or check her designs. She possessed an ascendant the most unlimited over her son’s mind: she governed, tho’ not invested with the vain title of regent. Though the constable had been uniformly unsuccessful in war, and was the most unfortunate general of his age—though his bigotry, his severity, and manners, disgusting and imperious, render him little an object of love, or even of veneration—yet we cannot help dropping a tear on the ashes of so veteran a commander, who had fought under Gaston de Foix at Ravenna, and had been the friend and favourite of two monarchs,

Francis

Francis and Henry. He alone could have inspired the young king with the desire of reigning himself, without his mother's pernicious counsels; and his death left her genius full scope to exert its destructive influence\*.

The

\* The constable," says Davila, " though over-  
 " powered by the fury of Condé's and Coligni's at-  
 " tack, yet continued to fight desperately. He had  
 " already received four slight wounds in the face, and  
 " one very large one on the head, from a battle-axe.  
 " While he was attempting to rally his dismayed  
 " troops, Robert Stuart rode up to him, with a pis-  
 " tol levelled at his head." " Dost thou not know me?"  
 " said Montmorenci, ' I am the constable of France.'  
 " " Yes," answered Stuart, ' I know thee well, and  
 " " therefore I present thee this.'—So saying, he dis-  
 " charged the pistol into his body. The constable  
 " fell; but while falling, dashed the hilt of his  
 " sword, which he had held fast in his hand, though  
 " the blade was broke, into his enemy's mouth. So  
 " forcible was the blow, that it fractured his jaw-  
 " bone, and laid him instantly on the ground. All his  
 " followers abandoned Montmorenci; and the Hugo-  
 " nots were carrying off his body, when the duke of  
 " Aumale and d'Amville, having routed the van  
 " commanded by Coligni, came up, and rescued  
 " him.

The post of constable was not filled up after Montmorenci. Several lords of the

“ him. They carried him, insensible and dying, to  
 “ Paris.—He expired on the ensuing day, with un-  
 “ daunted composure and magnanimity.”

Davila speaks with perfect impartiality of his character.—“ He was,” says he, “ a man of great capacity, mature wisdom, and long experience. Those who judged of him dispassionately, allowed he was a valiant soldier, and a dutiful servant; but a bad friend, and ever sovereignly governed by his own interest.” The constable was in his seventy-fifth year, when killed. His funeral rites were conducted with unusual pomp and solemnity.

Robert Stuart was afterwards taken prisoner at the battle of Jarnac, and brought before Henry duke of Anjou. The marquis De Villars besought the prince's permission to put him to death, as an offering to the manes of Montmorenci. He long refused to consent to so base a murder; but at length, overcome with the importunity of the marquis, he turned his head aside, and said, “ Well then—be it so.”—Stuart, with animated entreaty, represented to him how ignominious and dastardly a conduct he was about to authorise; and endeavoured to awaken his compassion and sense of honour.—All was ineffectual. He was led a little on one side, disarmed, and put to death, even in the hearing of the duke. Even Brantome, corrupt as he was, speaks with honest indignation

the court requesting it, Charles, jealous of his authority, and deeming this charge too great and near the throne, refused to confer it on any subject. "I want no person," said he, "to carry my sword: I am well able to carry it myself."—His character began to unveil and disclose itself. He possessed almost all the qualities requisite to constitute a great monarch, had they not been corrupted and depraved by examples and instructions the most flagitious. Dissimulation, cruelty, ferocity, libertinism, were either familiarised to him by constant habit, or even inculcated into him as virtues. Catherine, only anxious to reign, endeavoured to prevent her son from feeling his own powers, and of consequence freeing himself from the state of tutelage, in which she held him.

Meanwhile the Hugonot army retired; and, in defiance of the royal forces, ef-

fection and abhorrence of this infamous act, exactly similar to Montesquiou's, and the prince of Condé's.



fecting its junction with Casimir, son to the elector Palatine, who led to their assistance some German auxiliaries. The city of La Rochelle declared in their favour, and La Noue, one of their generals, made himself master of Orleans : but the prince of Condé was repulsed before Sens, by Henry the young duke of Guise. His combined troops formed a numerous body ; and in the hope of being again able to invest or distress the capital, he laid siege to Chartres. It succeeded ill ; but while he remained before it, new propositions of peace were tendered. They terminated in the treaty of Chartres, concluded on terms nearly similar to the preceding one : but the Hugonots, who were dissatisfied with it, as fraudulent and dangerous, gave it the denomination of “ La Paix boiteuse et mal-affize,” from the two principal negotiators of it on the part of the king ; one of whom, the marshal de Biron, was lame, and the other was seigneur of the land of “ Mal-affize.” It, however, produced a temporary suspension

pension of hostilities, though it could neither diffuse tranquillity, nor diminish that distrust and aversion which the opposite parties nourished against each other. — Here, as a sort of epocha preceding the yet more bloody scenes of this calamitous reign, I stop.

## CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

*Attempt to seize the prince of Condé.—Third civil war.—Battle of Jarnac.—Death of Condé.—Circumstances.—Character of Gaspard de Coligni.—Of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Siege of Poitiers.—Battle of Moncontour.—Arrival of the king in the camp before St. John d'Angeli.—Wonderous march of Coligni.—Peace concluded.—Treachery of the court.—King's marriage to the archduchess Elizabeth.—Her character.—Festivities at court.—Policy of Catherine.—Reflections.—Disimulation of Charles and the queen mother, to deceive Coligni.—He goes to court.—Seeds of division between the king and Henry duke of Anjou.—Contrast of their characters.—Affiance of Henry prince of Navarre to Margaret of Valois.—Death of the queen of Navarre.—Circumstances.—Inquiry into the nature of it.—Coligni persists to remain at Paris.—Margaret of Valois.—Her nuptials.—Character.—*

*Attempt to assassinate Coligni.—Diffimulation of Charles.—Resolution taken to exterminate the Hugonots.—Terrors and irresolution of the king previous to the massacre.—Death of Coligni.—Deaths of the Hugonot chiefs.—Detail of circumstances attending the massacre of Paris.—Conduct of Charles.—Fourth civil war.—Siege of La Rochelle.—Character of the duke of Alençon.—Remorse of the king.—Election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland.—Carousals at court.—Charles's impatience for his brother's departure.—Mary of Cleves.—Her character.—Relation of her amour with the duke of Anjou.—The king quarrels with his mother.—Henry begins his journey.—Illness of Charles.—Suspensions on that event.—King of Poland arrives at Cracow.—He abandons himself to grief.—New commotions.—Change in the king.—Conspiracy of the duke of Alençon discovered.—Charles's indisposition increases.—Intrigues of the queen mother to secure the regency.—Execution of La Mole and Coconas.—Circumstances*



*circumstances of the king's last illness.—His expiring commands.—Death of Charles the ninth.—Enquiry into the cause of it.—His character.—Children.—Funerals.—Conclusion of the Memoirs.*

SUCH was the sanguinary zeal which animated the partizans of either religion in these unhappy times; such was the perfidious system of policy embraced and pursued by Catherine of Medicis, that no permanent accommodation or coalition could take place throughout the kingdom. Scarce any of the conditions stipulated by the late treaty of Chartres were observed. Mutual rage armed the hands of Catholics and Hugonots against each other. Alternate insults and violences were committed, which strongly evinced how little they could be restrained by edicts of toleration; and the treacherous intentions of the court soon appeared too visibly to be mistaken.

The prince of Condé, not daring to trust himself in the power of his ene-

mies, had retired to a chateau of his wife at Noyers in Burgundy, whither Coligni likewise repaired. While they remained in this retirement, a soldier was one day observed in the act of measuring the fossë and walls, as if with intent to ascertain, whether they might be successfully attacked. The queen, who had intended to environ and surprize the great leaders of the Calvinists, no sooner found that her designs were discovered, than she ordered the royal troops to enter Burgundy. Condé and the admiral, who saw the project concerted for their destruction, were sensible of the extreme peril in which they stood. No safety was to be found except in flight, and that attended likewise with celerity. It was not easy to evade the many detached bodies of soldiery, already planted to intercept their passage: Necessity however dictated it as the sole means of preservation. The two generals therefore left Noyers, only escorted by a hundred and fifty cavalry, in the centre of which were placed their wives and children. Fortune favoured their enterprize.

terprize. An unusual drought enabled them to ford the Loire; and after having traversed a number of hostile provinces, amid continual and imminent dangers, they arrived safely at La Rochelle.

The conduct of the court breathed the most insatiable thirst of revenge. No healing measures were embraced amid the fury which seemed to possess and actuate them.—De l'Hopital, too mild and virtuous for the manners of a corrupt administration, and suspected of a partiality to the Hugonots, was deprived of the seals, and disgraced. The duke of Anjou, only sixteen years of age, was placed by his mother at the head of the royal army, though the marshal de Tavannes superintended and principally directed its operations. The young prince having joined his forces, an engagement was expected—but the advanced season of the year prevented it, and obliged both commanders to retire into winter quarters.

The ensuing spring saw them again in  
F 4 the

the field. After many unsuccessful attempts, the duke of Anjou at length compelled the Hugonots to a decisive action. The scene of war lay in the province of Angoumois, on the banks of the river Charente; and the fatal day of Jarnac put an end to the prince of Condé's life\*.

In

\* The victory of Jarnac must be entirely attributed to the prodigious disparity of numbers. The Hugonot infantry were almost all absent from the field of action, and only the cavalry disputed the day, with a courage and constancy which approached to frenzy.—Coligni was first attacked; and the prince of Condé, who lay at some distance, galloped immediately to his assistance. He made a masterly disposition, and sustained long, with far inferior strength, the whole fury of the Catholic army.

D'Andelot, who had been left with only a hundred and twenty horse, to delay the enemy, and give time to Condé to range his soldiery, performed this dangerous commission with his accustomed intrepidity and success. He filled the place, in which he had taken his stand, with confusion, smoke, and carnage. At the commencement of the attack, he rode up to Monfalez, who headed the first squadrons of the Catholic horse; and lifting up with his bridle hand the vizor of his helmet, discharged, with the other, a pistol into his



In that memorable battle, he behaved with a heroism and courage almost unexampled in

his face, and laid him dead on the ground.—Overborne by numbers, d'Andelot at length gave way, and retired to the main body.

Here the engagement was renewed with incredible obstinacy.—The admiral and his brother, in the left wing, maintained the combat for near an hour, against the young duke of Guise. But the royal army being continually supplied with fresh troops, Coligni's own standard beat to the ground, and the van completely routed, they deemed it unavailing to continue the fight, and provided for their safety by flight.—In the right wing, the counts of Montgomeri and La Rochefoucault, disputed with equal courage the glory of the day; but were at last compelled to quit the field.

Only the prince of Condé remained, incapable of turning his back. He was in the center, and had encountered, in the beginning of the action, the duke of Anjou's own squadron. Though repeatedly broken and charged through, he yet rallied his men, and returned to the engagement. Even when almost deserted, after the retreat of his adherents, and totally surrounded by the opposite forces, he fought with invincible courage. His horse being killed under him, and himself wounded in many places, he yet continued to defend and ward off the blows aimed at him, with one knee upon the ground, till Montesquiou put an end to his life.

in story. His arm was in a scarf at the time when it began. As he marched up at the head of his troops, his brother-in-law the count de la Rochefoucault's horse reared, and broke his leg. Unmoved by so painful an accident, and scorning to betray any emotions unbecoming his high station in that important moment, he coolly turned to those around him: "Learn," said he, "that unruly horses do more injury than service, in an army!"—An instant after, previous to the charge, addressing his followers, "French nobility," said he, "know that the prince of Condé, with an arm in a scarf, and a leg broke, fears not to give battle, since you attend him!"

The fortune of the day was unfavour-

The duke of Anjou behaved with the utmost bravery in this action, and shewed a dauntless spirit above his years. He once narrowly escaped being killed.—After the prince of Condé's death, no farther resistance was made. It became a flight; and evening, which drew on, in some measure befriended the conquered Hugonots. All these particulars are drawn from Davila. I omit many others, less interesting.

able

able to the Hugonots ; and Condé, thrown from his horse, was furrounded, and taken prisoner. Spent with fatigue, and wounded, they seated him at the foot of a tree ; when Montesquiou, captain of the duke of Anjou's Swiss guards galloped up to the spot. Having demanded who he was, and being informed, “ Tuez, tuez, mor-  
 “ dieu !” said he ; and drawing out a pistol, discharged a ball into his head, which instantly killed him. The cool and merciless barbarity of this assassination, on a man wounded and defenceless, after the heat of the action was past, excited universal abhorrence ; and the enormity of the crime was rendered more conspicuous, from the high rank of the person put to death. The duke of Anjou neither avowed or punished it, but he permitted the prince's body to be laid upon an ass, and carried to the castle of Jarnac, where he went himself to lodge\*.

Thus

\* Though Davila does not speak of the prince of Conde's death, as of an assassination, yet such it must be

Thus fell the first Louis prince of Condé, by the hand of an assassin, rather than of a warrior.

be esteemed. The French historians are unanimous on this point. He however relates the circumstance of his being carried across a *pack-horse* to the castle of Jarnac, to the joy and savage diversion of the whole army, who jested at this melancholy and affecting spectacle. He adds, that the duke of Anjou would not suffer any indignity to be offered to his body, in consideration of his alliance to the blood royal. He owns all his sublime and shining qualities, and only laments that they were obscured by rebellion.

“ We found him,” says the writer of the duke of Montpensier’s life, “ lying across an ass; and the baron de Magnac asked me if I should know him again? But as he had one eye out of his head, and was otherwise much disfigured, I knew not what to answer. The corpse was brought in before all the princes and lords, who ordered his face to be washed, and recognized him perfectly. They then put him into a sheet, and he was carried before a man on horseback to the castle of Jarnac, where Monseigneur, the king’s brother, went to lodge.”

Brantome has likewise given us many interesting circumstances of this tragical event. The prince, says he, fought with a courage heightened by despair, on that day. He was however soon beat to the ground  
by



a warrior. The unhappy circumstances of the times had, in some degree, necessitated him, though allied by blood to the crown, to unsheath the sword against his sovereign; and the great capacities for military enterprize which he possessed, by superior numbers. It had been recommended to the duke of Anjou's favourites, to kill Condé at all events; and Henry himself did not disguise the joy which he felt at it. After the action was over, he chose to gratify his eyes with the sight of his dead body; and it was then thrown, in derision and mockery, across an old she-ass, the head and legs dangling down on either side. It remained during the ensuing night, in a room exactly under that where the duke slept. After having been exposed to the view of the whole army, it was restored to the duke of Longueville his brother-in-law, who interred him with his ancestors at Vendome. There was made on him this sarcastic epitaph.

“ L'an mil cinq cens soixante neuf

“ Entre Jarnac et Chateau-neuf,

“ Fut porté sur une anesse,

“ Cil qui vouloit oster la Messe.”

Brantome says, he intimately knew Montesquiou, and that he was a brave and gallant gentleman. At the subsequent siege of St. John d'Angeli, he was killed by the ball of a harquebuse.

rendered

rendered him the hero of his own party, and the terror of the opposite one. There is too much reason to believe that Henry duke of Anjou authorized and commanded the captain of his guard to put him to death. He was not naturally cruel; but the prince of Condé had been his rival for the lieutenancy of the kingdom, and was peculiarly an object of his detestation: besides that in him they apprehended the whole Hugonot faction must infallibly be destroyed\*.

Coligni, who with the broken remains of the cavalry, had retreated to St. John

\* Monsieur de Voltaire, in his beautiful poem of the *Henriade*, introduces Henry the fourth pathetically lamenting the prince's death. It is to our Elizabeth he relates the story. His lines are so masterly and touching, that I shall make no apology for the insertion of them. It is Henry who exclaims.

“ O! Plaines de Jarnac! O! coup trop inhumain!

“ Barbare Montesquiou, moins guerrier qu'assassin,

“ Condé déjà mourant tomba sous ta furie;

“ J'ai vu porter le coup; j'ai vu trancher sa vie.

“ Helas! trop jeune encore, mon bras, mon foible

“ bras

“ Ne put ni prévenir ni venger son trepas.”

d'Angeli,

d'Angeli, became by the death of the prince, the leader of the Calvinist forces. He was in every respect equal to, and calculated for this arduous station. Of years more ripe and advanced than Condé, he joined the experience of a veteran commander, to a courage the most intrepid and undismayed. Loyal to his prince even in the midst of rebellion; ardently zealous for the glory of his country, though a fatal necessity compelled him to appear in arms against it, Nature had designed him to promote its grandeur and prosperity. In happier times he had been the guardian of France, enrolled among her heroes and patriots, her Condés and her Turennes. Less ambitious than the prince, he was ever ready to accept the overtures of peace. More attached to the religious principles of Calvinism, and unseduced by love or pleasure, to sacrifice and forget them, he steadily pursued those objects for the defence of which he had first drawn the sword. Fertile in resources, vast and capacious in his projects,

rising

rising on his defeats, and magnanimous in circumstances the most distressful, he long sustained with inferior force, the utmost efforts of his victorious enemies.

Jane, queen of Navarre, a princess endowed with virtues and qualities of the highest nature; and inheriting from her mother Margaret of Valois a strength of mind, and elegance of genius rarely found, seconded the admiral's measures for the protection and preservation of the Hugonot party. She brought her son Henry, yet in early youth, to La Rochelle, and Coligni was declared general of the forces, under the prince of Navarre, and his cousin the young prince of Condé.

The intelligence of the victory at Jarnac, and the death of the Hugonot leader, was received at Paris with unusual demonstrations of joy. The king rose at midnight to sing *Te Deum* in person, announced it to all the sovereign princes, and sent the standards gained in the action to Rome, as a present the most acceptable to the pontiff. The real advantages resulting  
from



from it to the royal party, were however very inconsiderable. Henry duke of Anjou was repulsed before Cognac; while Coligni, reinforced from every quarter, appeared again in the field, more terrible from his late ill success. The death of his brother d'Andelot, who expired of a pestilential fever at the city of Saintes, was deeply regretted by all his adherents, who lost in him a chieftain eminent for intrepidity and martial spirit.

Meanwhile the admiral, at the head of an army, faced the duke of Anjou in the Limosin, after having effected a junction with count Mansfeldt, who led to his assistance a large reinforcement of German auxiliaries. In the great skirmish of La Roche Abeille, the Hugonots were victorious; while the count de Montgomeri, one of their most active and enterprising generals, reduced all Bearn to obedience, and extended his ravages into Languedoc.

Coligni, encouraged by these prosperous events, determined once more to pass the Loire, and carry the war to the gates of

Paris, as the only effectual means to procure a termination of it: but unfortunately, he changed his resolutions, and undertook the siege of Poitiers.—Henry duke of Guise, son to Francis, and not inferior to his father in genius, in courage, or ambition, had thrown himself into it. Panting to signalize his prowess, and animated with uncommon detestation to the admiral, whom he ever regarded as his father's murderer, he made a defence the most obstinate and resolute. Coligni, compelled at length by the duke of Anjou's near approach, who had laid siege to Chatelleraud, and finding his forces greatly diminished, retired without success from before the place. The battle of Moncontour, which followed only a few days afterwards, seemed to menace with total destruction the Hugonot party. The action lasted more than three hours; and victory declared a second time for Henry and the Catholics. Near nine thousand French and Germans of the vanquished side, were left upon the field. Scarce  
could

could Coligni, wounded in the face, and accompanied by about three hundred cavalry, who in some measure stopt the pursuit of the conquerors, secure his retreat to Parthenai \*.

Any

\* This was the most bloody and decisive engagement of any which was fought during the civil wars. It began two hours after sun-rise. Coligni, who knew that the Catholics were superior to his own forces in discipline, still more than in numbers, would have declined a contest, the inequality of which was visible; but the clamours of his soldiery, and peculiarly of the German auxiliaries, compelled him, reluctantly, to hazard the issue of battle.

It was disputed with such incredible obstinacy and mutual antipathy, that the very sutlers, lacqueys, and pioneers of either camp, mingled in the fray; and each individual fought, as if on his personal exertion alone the fortune of the day depended. Conquest long hung dubious; but at length the Switzers in the royal army having cut to pieces the Germans of whom scarce two hundred remained alive, an universal rout succeeded.

Henry duke of Anjou signalized his courage, and appeared ever in the first ranks of danger; he narrowly escaped death more than once. But the admiral exerted on that day, the rash and impetuous courage of the youngest soldier, as well as the conduct of an

Any genius, except his own, must have sunk under this disastrous reverse of fortune: but his mind, accustomed to adversity, and unshaken in every situation, seemed to rally and collect its powers in this moment of distress. The very even-

able general. The Rhinegrave encountered him in person; and firing his pistol into his face, beat out four of his teeth, and broke his jaw. Coligni discharging his own into the Rhinegrave's vizor, laid him instantly dead upon the ground. He afterwards continued gallantly fighting, though the blood ran in such quantity from his wound, as to fill both his helmet and gorget.

At length, seeing his troops dispersed on all sides, and flying before the conquerors; his voice quite spent and scarce capable of being heard; himself covered with blood, and sinking under fatigue, he found it vain longer to dispute the field.—Retiring therefore with the two young princes of Navarre and Condé, who had remained at some distance during the combat, he gained Parthenai the same evening.—The counts of Mansfeldt and Nassau, with about to two thousand of their men, joined him at night.—The duke of Anjou commanded quarter to be given three thousand of the French infantry, who had thrown down their arms. Near two hundred colours were taken. I extract these particulars principally from Davila.



ing of the day on which the battle was fought, though almost incapacitated from speaking by his wound, he held a council of his chief officers; and dispatched messengers into England, Switzerland, and the German states, to announce his perilous condition and late defeat. He demanded, as in the common cause of religion, a supply of troops and money, without which the consequences to his party must be the most fatal. Himself in person retired into the province of Saintonge; and collecting the scattered fugitives dispersed at Moncontour, meditated new opposition to the royal forces.

Had Henry instantly pursued the enemy broken and dispirited by so many calamities, before they had sufficiently recovered from their terror to reunite and appear in the field; he would probably have exterminated almost the whole of them, or at least rendered them incapable of farther resistance: but the siege of St. John d'Angeli, which he immediately commenced, destroyed all the beneficial

consequences, that might have resulted from his late victory. Charles, who had long beheld his brother's glory with a jealous emulation, and who possessed equal or superior courage, could no longer be restrained from appearing in the army. Catherine, attached to the duke of Anjou with a peculiar tenderness of affection, and anxiously endeavouring by every means to exalt this favourite child, tried in vain to withhold the king. On his arrival in the camp before St. John d'Angeli, he appeared transported with the scene: he was constantly present in the trenches, exposed his person like the meanest soldier, and declared publicly, that he would gladly share his crown with Henry, so he might alternately command the forces\*.

After

\* Charles early saw with discontent, his mother's partiality to the duke of Anjou; he complained of it to her; and his temper, naturally impetuous, quick and violent, could not brook this preference. Catherine on the other hand, discerning and penetrative, feared that Charles, endowed with great capacity  
for

After a siege of two months the city capitulated ; but La Noue, and the count de la Rochefoucault yet sustained the party in La Rochelle ; while Coligni having assembled all his adherents, began that wondrous march through so many provinces, almost unexampled in history\*.

In

for affairs, would not always be held in tutelage, and might eventually dispense with her counsels, and deprive her of all power. Henry's indolence and submission secured her from those apprehensions, in case he should ever mount the throne.

An anecdote which Brantome mentions, very strongly evinces the king's dissatisfaction at Henry's trophies and early greatness. Soon after the battle of Moncontour, D'Orat the poet had presented him some verses in his praise.—“ It is not to me,” said “ Charles, these eulogiums are due ! I have not merited any panegyrics, or performed any high exploits ! To my brother they may, indeed, justly be addressed, who is every day employed in acquiring renown in arms.”

\* The following song, says Brantome, was commonly sung by the Hugonot soldiers, after Louis prince of Condé's untimely death.

“ Le prince de Condé,

“ Il a été tué ;

G 4

“ Mais

In defiance of the inclemency of winter, of so many rivers which intersected his course, of the royal generals and Catholic forces, he traversed all Languedoc, remounted along the banks of the Rhone, and appeared in Burgundy the ensuing spring, after having carried terror through all the south of France.

Charles, of high and determined spirit, submitted with difficulty to permit the admiral thus to ravage his dominions, unpursued. He would have followed him immediately, had not the queen, who dreaded his assuming the command in person, prevented him, by the remonstrances of the marechal de Tavannes, who assured his majesty, that the troops were already too much exhausted and broken, to attempt new enterprises in so advanced a season.

“ Mais monsieur l'Admiral

“ Est encore à cheval,

“ Avec La Rochefoucaut,

“ Pour chasser tous ces papaux, papaux, papaux !”

The



The re-appearance of Coligni at the head of a formidable army; the combat of Arnay-le-Duc, where he had manifestly the advantage; the complicated ills under which the unhappy kingdom groaned; and the dread of future calamities yet more insupportable, at length produced a termination of hostilities. Peace so long and anxiously desired, was again re-established on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; and public tranquillity seemed once more to spread a calm over the state, shaken and convulsed by so many intestine commotions.—But all these flattering appearances concealed the most horrible designs; and Catherine, whom experience had convinced, that Coligni and the Calvinists were not to be reduced by force, had already planned the fatal massacre, which she executed two years after. All the intermediate period was employed in the most consummate dissimulation; in the fallacious arts of lulling to sleep the wretches destined to destruction. Only the vast and comprehensive

hensive genius of the queen-mother, containing and uniting in itself the springs of all human discord and confusion, could have concerted a system of vengeance so enormously flagitious, so unprecedented in the long records of time. Like some minister of an angry Deity, she appears occupied only in schemes of ruin to her unhappy people, scattering death, and marking her course with carnage and desolation.

Pleasure and dissipation notwithstanding seemed to engage the whole court; and the marriage of Margaret, sister to the king, with Henry prince of Navarre, was already proposed, as the connecting tie of union and obliteration\*.

The

\* It is impossible not to enter with some minuteness and curiosity into the amours of Margaret of Valois, the most beautiful, accomplished, but dissolute princess of modern times. It is said, so violent was her love of pleasure, that at twelve years of age, she had sacrificed her honour to it. The young Enragues and Charry, captain in the royal guards, dispute the precedency in her affections. It is at least

The duke of Guise, enamour'd of the princess, attempted to raise obstacles to these

least certain, that both had enjoyed her person at those unripe years.—Her warm and animated attachment to her own brother, Henry duke of Anjou, gave rise to similar suspicions; which, indeed, her character, conduct, and writings, all tend to confirm. Henry was handsome, amiable, and fond of women: The libertinism of the court authorised every debauchery. The duke of Guise was beloved by her with the most unbounded passion. She herself does not disguise it in her memoirs; and the duke of Anjou withdrew from her his confidence, when he found the duke of Guise master of her person and affections.

In the celebrated manifesto, which Henry the fourth caused to be drawn up, and presented to the reigning pope, as a justification of his conduct, in soliciting a divorce from Margaret, he minutely enumerates her debaucheries, and successive lovers. I think it so astonishing and unparalleled a disclosure of the queen's conduct, that I shall extract several particulars from it.

“ The princess, says the manifesto, was only eleven  
 “ years old, when she began to yield to the pleasures of love. Entragues and Charry were in turn  
 “ favoured by her; and the former carried his proofs  
 “ of attachment to such a length, as nearly to  
 “ sacrifice to it his life. The prince of Martigues  
 “ succeeded

these nuptials, in the hope of obtaining himself her hand. Charles, indignant of his

“succeeded to their place, and was fondly beloved.  
 “Naturally vain, he could not conceal an intrigue  
 “so flattering, and divulged the secret of their  
 “amours, which became universally known. He  
 “always wore on the most dangerous occasions, an  
 “embroidered scarf, which his royal mistress had  
 “given him; as well as a beautiful little dog, presented by the same hand.

“The tears she shed for this favourite’s death,  
 “were dried by the duke of Guise; who became in  
 “turn her paramour, by the good offices of madame  
 “de Carnavalet.”——“On pretend,” continues Henry, “que les ducs d’Anjou et d’Alençon trouble-  
 “rent cette intrigue; et qu’elle eut pour eux des  
 “complaisances, que le droit du sang n’autorisait  
 “pas; mais je ne puis croire, que sa debauché ait été  
 “jusqu’à cet excès.”

I All these lovers preceded the king of Navarre.—  
 Henry the fourth then avows, in the most pointed terms, his completion of the marriage rites.—The words are very curious.—“Quoiqu’il en soit, elle  
 “n’avoit pas mal debuté avant notre mariage; et  
 “tout le monde sera aisément persuadé, que je n’ai  
 “pas eu besoin d’une grande vigueur, pour emporter  
 “la bague à la première course.”

The manifesto continues the enumeration of her subsequent irregularities and gallantries. They almost



his conduct, and resenting such presumption, gave orders to his natural brother Henry d'Angoulesme, to put the duke to death, as he went to the chace; but he deprecated this vengeance by a speedy marriage with Catherine of Cleves, widow to the prince of Portien\*.

The

most exceed the limits of credibility. Yet Henry, in the beginning of this extraordinary piece, which is opened with the greatest solemnity, attests the Deity as the judge of human actions, for the veracity of his assertions, and integrity of his intentions.—I may have occasion to mention both it, and Margaret, elsewhere.

\* Even Davila confirms the attachment of the duke of Guise to the princess Margaret; and says, she long persisted peremptorily to refuse any other husband.—“One night,” adds he, “as the duke was going into the great hall of the palace, there being a ball at court, dressed with the utmost magnificence, and adorned with jewels, he met the king, who had planted himself purposely at the door. Charles, with an angry air, demanded, “Whither he was going?” The duke answered, “That he came to serve his majesty.”—“I have no occasion for your services,” replied he.—Henry saw the perilous situation in which he had engaged himself; and de-  
 “ terminated

The king had already entered into his twenty-first year. It was become advisable to marry him ; and his mother, after having vainly solicited Elizabeth of England's hand, fixed on the archduchess Elizabeth, daughter of the emperor Maximilian the second.—The two dukes of Anjou and Alençon, Charles's brothers, were sent to receive the new queen at Sedan ; and he himself advanced to meet her at Mezieres, where the nuptials were solemnized and accomplished. She was an amiable and virtuous princess, devout, humble and submissive. Her capacity, limited and slender, gave Catherine no umbrage ; and she was neither consulted in, or privy to any of the iniquitous measures pursued during her husband's reign. Though agreeable in her person, though mild and gentle in her manners, she never could attain any empire over Charles's heart, and only possessed his esteem. The beau-

“ terminated instantly to recover his sovereign's favour,  
“ by putting it out of his own power to be obnoxious  
“ to him.”

tiful

tiful Mary Touchet had long reigned there without a rival; and the king, naturally constant, remained unalterably attached to her till the hour of his death\*.

Elizabeth was notwithstanding crowned soon after at St. Denis; and the queen-mother, whose magnificence and taste eminently appeared on these occasions, displayed all her talents for pleasure in

\* Mary Touchet was daughter to the "Lieutenant Particulier" of Orleans. The time of Charles's first attachment to her is not certain; but it appears that she had acquired the highest influence over him before his marriage, since from the anecdote of the picture, it is clear she dreaded no rival.—Elizabeth of Austria's portrait being shewn her, she said, after having attentively regarded it; "L'Allemande ne me fait pas peur!"—Her personal and mental attractions were equally pre-eminent. "I have seen her picture," says the author of the "Anecdotes des reines et regentes de France," "done in Crayons, and during the prime of her beauty. The contour of her face was round, her eyes finely shaped and lively, her forehead small, her nose justly proportioned, her mouth little and crimson, the lower part of her face admirable." Such was the celebrated Mary Touchet!

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the entertainments exhibited at court. The fictions of antiquity, the allegories of Greek and Roman fable were called in to embellish the representations. A refinement, superior to the progress which the human mind had made in the sixteenth century, and little, if in any degree inferior to the splendid displays of art and luxurious elegance under Louis the fourteenth's reign, characterises all the amusements and carousals of Catherine. Her extraordinary and universal genius comprehended every thing in its embrace; and shone equally distinguished, whether exerted in the cabinet or at a banquet, whether directed to the destruction or delight of human kind. She even seems to have blended and united things the most opposite and discordant. Her versatility of mind enabled her to pass with the most rapid transition, from the horrors of war, to all the voluptuous dissipations of indolence and peace; and we are forced to lament, that a capacity so exalted and sublime, only produced, from the principles

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which



which actuated it, more general and lasting evils to mankind \*.

The grand scheme of deceiving the Hugonot leaders and drawing them into the fatal snare, now totally occupied the queen-mother. She had tutored the king her son but too well, and instructed him in all the lessons of profound and pernicious dissimulation. His very virtues and great qualities were transformed under her baneful touch, into vices and crimes. His prudence, penetration, and discretion, she

\* In the entertainments presented at court on Elizabeth's coronation, the peculiar situation of the state was enigmatically figur'd under various forms. It was a political mirror, under the appearance of an amusement. Charles the ninth was represented in the character of Jupiter; Catherine, in that of Juno; the young queen, in that of Minerva. The Hugonots appeared under the names of Typhon and the Giants. Even the vengeance of St. Bartholomew, already planned, was darkly alluded to in the mottos and devices chosen. This was one, addressed to the king.

“ Cadme, relinque ratem; pastoria sibila finge;

“ Fas superare dolo, quem vis non vincit aperta.”

The meaning of this remark is too evidently connected with the ensuing massacre to be mistaken.

converted into a subtle and perfidious policy. His natural vivacity became passion and fury. His courage degenerated into stern ferocity ; and his heart, steeled to the impressions of benevolence, rectitude and pity, was inflamed with a savage thirst of blood and vengeance.—For Catherine there is no apology, no justification to the latest posterity. Her name, in distant ages, will be pronounced with detestation ; nor can the brilliancy of her genius, the seduction of her captivating manners, preserve her from ignominy and abhorrence.—But over Charles, over the miserable king, every eye of sensibility will drop a tear ! Accustom'd from infancy to precepts and examples the most unworthy ; taught to nourish a sanguinary zeal, as the immediate voice of Heaven, and encouraged to spill the blood of his subjects, as meritorious and acceptable to it, how could he escape the unhappy infection ! Too late he awoke from the dreadful delusion. Too late he beheld the abyss of ruin and infamy,

infamy, into which his mother's fatal maxims and advice had plunged him. Death permitted him not to expiate his offences; and he expired in the flower of youth, an awful lesson to future times, that monarchs cannot, with impunity, violate the great and sacred duties of humanity!

Every artifice of affected pardon, every appearance of oblivion and perfect confidence were practised to convince the queen of Navarre and Coligni, that the king and court were disposed to harmony and friendship.—The Hugonot deputies were sent back, after a reception the most gracious, with the amplest securities and confirmations of the peace. Count Ludovic of Nassau, and Teligni, son-in-law to the admiral, were received with uncommon distinction, and loaded with favours. Coligni was himself invited to lay aside all distrust, and repose himself on his sovereign's honour.

Confiding in this sacred pledge as he deemed it, and happy to give a proof of his

implicit reliance on the virtue of his prince, he came at length to Blois. Charles embraced him, hung upon his neck, and kissed him. He gave him the tender and endearing epithet of father; he professed for him the most filial deference and respect. He was re-admitted into the council; received from the royal bounty a donation of an hundred thousand livres, and all his estates were restored. After having permitted him to visit his castle of Chatillon, the king again recalled him; redoubled his caresses, showered on him a thousand favours, and even carried his dissembled attachment to so prodigious a length, that the duke of Guise, and the more zealous Catholics took the alarm; and began to dread, lest Coligni should eventually effect that alteration in Charles's heart, which was only feigned originally.

When the admiral withdrew a second time, the king yet kept up a continual and unreserved communication with him by letters. He re-assured him of his de-  
termination



termination to accomplish the nuptials of his sister Margaret with the prince of Navarre ; professed to him his resolute intentions of shaking off the fetters, in which his mother and Henry duke of Anjou had hitherto held him : and as the last flattering bait, declared that he would send an army into the Netherlands, to assist the revolted provinces against Philip the second, at the head of which he should himself be placed. Coligni, whose bosom glowed with patriotism, with the love of his country's glory, and a just indignation against Spanish bigotry and oppression, could not resist so animating a motive. He even persuaded the queen of Navarre to visit the king and his mother at Blois. She was received with an excess of honours, and dissembled fondness. The negotiation for her son's marriage was resumed, and finally concluded as the connecting bond of future tranquillity. Only the dispensation from Rome remained, to delay the consummation of their nuptials.

The trophies which Henry duke of

Anjou had acquired by the two victories of Jarnac and Moncontour, the early glory with which he seemed to be invested, and the proud title which he emulated, of restorer and defender of the state, justly gave umbrage to Charles. He beheld himself obscured in Henry's superior lustre. He regarded him as his rival in fame, perhaps in empire. He saw, and resented Catherine's unconcealed predilection and partiality for him. These seeds of aversion and discontent began already to ripen and display themselves.—The queen-mother, who watched with peculiar tenderness over her darling son, and whose ambitious mind ever projected schemes of greatness for her children, commenced therefore already her intrigues for his election to the crown of Poland. Montluc, bishop of Valence, was dispatched to the court of Warsaw, though Sigismund Augustus, the reigning king, was yet alive; and he succeeded beyond expectation in his commission.

The duke of Anjou seemed at this time  
to

to present the idea of the most accomplished hero ; nor can we be surprized, on the consideration of his brilliant qualities and numerous graces, at Catherine's attachment to him. His person was beautiful, and finely made, above any prince's of the age \*. A majesty, tempered with sweetness, accompanied all his movements and actions. His courage had been distinguished in two great engagements, and at years the most immature. An eloquence flowing, dignified, and commanding, disposed all hearts to admire and love

\* Desportes, the most elegant poet of the time, describes him in these lines. It is the portrait of Adonis himself.

“ Il eut la taille belle et le visage beau ;  
 “ Son teint étoit de lys, et de roses pourpretés ;  
 “ Et ses yeux rigoureux dardoient mille sagettes.  
 “ On le prend pour l'amour !” —

Davila confirms the high idea of the duke of Anjou ; and expatiates minutely on his uncommon personal beauty, courage, eloquence, and other elegant or sublime qualities. He says, all mankind had their eyes fixed on him, and had conceived the greatest expectations from his future conduct.

him. His presence and demeanour announced a prince: nor had the house of Valois produced any one, whose personal manners were so winning and seductive.

The contrast in many points of light, though unessential, between himself and the king, tended to raise him into superior lustre. Charles, endowed with much greater qualifications, more calculated to reign; possessing vigour, capacity, discernment, memory, activity, judgment, courage, was yet carried away by the impetuosity of his passions, and presented little except the unamiable part of his character to view.—Henry, under a captivating and deceptive exterior, cover'd with imputed virtues, and decked with laurels which Tavannes's wisdom and conduct had won, was defective in that force of mind, those kingly qualities worthy of a throne, with which his brother was enriched. Beneath that winning form was concealed an effeminate indolence, a voluptuous and enervate softness, a prodigality without bounds, an indulgence to favourites,



favourites, the most pernicious to his kingdom and himself.—The first, it is probable, had he lived, would have wiped out his crimes, and shewn himself worthy the crown he wore.—The latter survived to complete the sad tissue of ills begun under Charles, and fell at length a sacrifice to his own misconduct, weakness, and irresolution.

The duke of Anjou had not, however, yet betrayed those errors and vices, which characterized Henry the third, on his accession to the throne. Love and gallantry could scarce be ranked among the list of faults, in a court so dissolute and libertine as that of Catherine of Medicis. The young prince was enamoured of Mademoiselle de Chateauneuf, and equally beloved by her; and this attachment was only broken and dissolved by the more violent passion which he afterwards conceived for the princess of Condé\*.

Pius

\* Mademoiselle de Chateauneuf was a Beauty of the most touching kind. Her name was Renée de Rieux.

She

Pius the fifth, who at this time occupied the papal chair, terrified at the intention of marrying the princess Margaret to a Hugonot, which he apprehended highly injurious to the interests of religion; and unconscious of the designs concealed beneath this alliance, refused and delayed the requisite dispensation. He even excited the young king of Portugal,

She possessed an elegance of form and manner peculiar to herself; and long after her retreat from court, it was thought a very high eulogium on a young person, to say, "*Quelle avoit de l'air de Mademoiselle Chateaufort.*"—Desportes, the Tibullus of the sixteenth century, celebrates her charms in many of his sonnets, addressed to her under the duke of Anjou's name.—After Henry the third's return from Poland, he designed to have married her to the count de Brienne; but that nobleman quitted France, to avoid so compulsory a marriage. She became the wife of a Florentine, named Antinotti, whom she afterwards killed with her own hand. Her second husband was that Altoviti, baron de Castellane, of whom I made mention in a former note; and who was put to death by Henry d'Angoulême, natural son to Henry the second.—His widow died in great obscurity some years after.

the

the celebrated and unfortunate Sebastian, to demand Margaret's hand; and dispatched a nuncio into France to press her acceptance of it.—Charles excused himself, as having previously engaged his honour; but implored the legate to assure the holy Father of his filial obedience; and tenderly pressing his hands, added with warmth, “Oh ! s'il m'étoit permis de m'expliquer  
“davantage !”

Gregory the thirteenth, who succeeded Pius, having granted the dispensation, the day of the nuptials was fixed. Jane, queen of Navarre, arrived at Paris with her son and the prince of Condé; but while she was engaged in preparations for the approaching ceremony, a malignant fever with which she was attacked, put an end to her life, after five days illness.—The multitude, ever disposed to attribute the deaths of great personages to unnatural causes, supposed that poison had been used for that purpose. A perfumer, named René, who had followed the queen-mother from Florence, of which place he

was a native, has been accused as the author of this crime. It is pretended that he even avowed himself as such, and boasted of it publicly. — Some perfumed gloves, which Jane bought of him, were said to have been the medium through which the poison was transmitted. Catherine of Medicis was supposed to be the perpetrator of it—but these suspicions are probably erroneous and ill founded. The physician and surgeon who opened her body, and who were both Hugonots, found no symptoms or appearances to justify such a conjecture. On the contrary, they declared her to have expired of an abscess in her breast; and there is every reason to believe their deposition\*.

Coligni,

\* I must however confess, that Davila asserts, in the most express terms, that the queen of Navarre was poisoned. — “The first blow of the tempest,” says he, “fell upon Jane, whom the king and his mother thought fit to take off. The poison was administered, *as it was reported*, in the trimming of a pair of gloves; but in a manner so imperceptible, and in so nice a proportion, that, after having worn  
“ them



Coligni, yet irresolute, dreading Catherine and Charles's treachery, and render-

ed  
them some time, she was seized with a violent fever, which put an end to her life in four days. — The Hugonots instantly took the alarm, and began to suspect some unfair play. To erase from their minds these apprehensions, the king, knowing that the poison had left no traces, except in her brain, ordered her body to be publicly opened. The vitals and intestines being found and untainted, the head was left untouched, under pretence of respect. The surgeons then declared, that she died a natural death, caused by a fever."

Mezerai has strengthened this report, by having said, that the two persons who opened the queen's body did not touch her head, where it was supposed the poison had left traces too visible. D'Aubigné seems to make no question of her having been taken off by unnatural means. — Voltaire, on the contrary, has taken considerable pains to refute these assertions. "La Chronologie Novenaire" expressly declares, that Caillard her physician, and Desnoëuds her surgeon, *did* dissect her brain; which they found in a sound state.

The queen had during her whole life been subject to violent head-achs, attended with an itching; and she expressly requested, that the cause of this complaint might be searched into; in the intention of relieving

ed even more distrustful by their caresses, long delayed to appear at court. New artifices were employed for that purpose; and an open commencement of hostilities permitted against Philip the second in the Netherlands, as the last confirmation

relieving her children, if they should be attacked with the same disorder.—Her desire was complied with; and the surgeons discovered only some little vesicles full of water, between the brain and the membrane investing it; which they declared to have been the cause of her malady.—Catherine needs not supposititious crimes to blacken her character: Unhappily she committed too many, from which it is impossible to justify her.

Davila allows Jane to have been a great and accomplished princess. He celebrates her courage, capacity, chastity, and magnificence: and adds, “ That she would have been worthy of immortal  
“ praise, if she had not presumed, without sufficient  
“ learning, to explore the profoundest mysteries of divinity, and pertinaciously adhered to the errors  
“ of Calvin.” — D’Aubigné extols her with the highest eulogiums. He says, “ She had nothing  
“ womanly about her except her sex; a masculine  
“ mind, an elevated capacity, a magnanimity and  
“ fortitude of soul, proof to all the storms of adversity.”

of the king's design to remain inviolably true to his past engagements.—Conquer'd by this consummate piece of perfidious politics, the admiral yielded against his better reason, and arrived at Paris, accompanied by a prodigious number of the Hugonot nobility.

The prince of Condé's nuptials with Mary of Cleves, sister to the duchess of Guise, were solemnized at the chateau of Blandi, near Melun. Those of Henry, now become king of Navarre by his mother's death, were appointed for the ensuing month. Every testimony of the most respectful and cordial friendship was studiously conferred on the Calvinist nobles, and their leader. Every endeavour was used to lull asleep their fears and suspicions.

Notwithstanding these demonstrations of amity, the inhabitants of La Rochelle dispatched repeated messengers, to implore Coligni not to rely on a king, violent even to fury, on a faithless Italian, their irreconcilable and mortal enemy. But tho'

conscious of the danger, he remained immovable; and replied with the truest greatness of soul, that he would rather suffer himself to be dragged through the streets of Paris, than renew the horrors of a fourth civil war, and plunge his unhappy country in new miseries. — The marechal de Montmorenci, either more clear-sighted, or more timid, obtained Charles's permission to retire to Chantilli, under pretence of an indisposition; and by that artifice saved both himself and all his family from the destruction intended them\*.

The

\* Davila says, that the admiral did not flight the sollicitations repeatedly made him to quit the court, from any feelings of a public or patriotic nature: but, elated with the honours shewn him, and intoxicated with his good fortune, he declared, that Charles and his council, neither wished nor dared to attempt any thing against him and his adherents. — It is however much more natural as well as pleasing, to think that Coligni was influenced by motives more glorious and sublime. The other French historians attribute such to him; and we know, that Davila, though one of the greatest writers of modern times, scarcely ever  
accounts



The nuptials of the king of Navarre with the princess Margaret were solemnized at “Notre Dame” soon after. The young queen was in the full bloom of her charms, and had just compleated her twentieth year.—In her are said to have been united all the great qualities and virtues, with all the vices and defects of the family of Valois, from whence she sprung. Her personal beauties were captivating and excitve of love, in the most supream degree. She inspired passion and desire into the coldest bosoms.—Her complexion was clear and animated; her hair of the finest black, and her eyes

accounts for any action, or supposes it to have proceeded from disinterested and generous principles.

He relates an extraordinary anecdote, to prove the suspicions entertained among the Hugonots, relative to the king's sincerity. Langoiran, one of them, distrusting the appearance of affairs, determined at length to retire from Paris.—Coligni, when he came to take leave of him, demanded, “Why he would not remain?” “Because,” answered he, “I see you are too much  
“carressed; and I choose rather to save myself with  
“fools, than perish with those who are too wise.”

equally full of fire and languor. Her look, soft, voluptuous, and tender, indicated a heart capable of the most melting excesses, of the most intoxicating transports.—Full of majesty in her movements, and possessing, like her mother, the art of disposing the ornaments of dress with the most exquisite and consummate taste, she announced her high birth the instant she appeared.

Equal to the first Margaret of Valois in genius, in imagination, in every species of intellectual elegance, she like her, was celebrated by all the poets of her time, with eulogiums the most impassioned and flattering. They addressed her rather as a deity than a mortal, and gave her the title of “Venus Urania,” and “Celestis.”—Her munificence, her thirst of glory, her protection of letters, her vanity, her unbounded attachment to the pleasures of love, were all striking traits of Francis the first, whom she intimately resembled, and whose memory she idolized. Courteous and affable in her manners, like her  
father

father Henry the second, she was likewise of a temper yielding, flexible, and attached to favourites.

Capable of the greatest affairs of government, but carried away by inclination, and plunged in dissolute delights, she only emerged by paroxysms from pleasure, and returned to it again, from an incapacity of resisting its allurements. Mingling devotion with debauchery, and connecting the fervours of religion with the excesses of luxurious dissipation, she appeared, one while, a penitent, stretched at the foot of the altar, and bewailing her past transgressions; at another, a refined voluptuary, devoted to all the delirious enchantment of epicurean wantonness.

An unstudied eloquence, a graceful facility of expression, more affecting than any exertions of art, characterised her in an eminent degree.—Hurried away by an enthusiasm and fire which she could not restrain, her very virtues were carried to an extreme; her vices were not concealed even beneath the veil of decorum. En-

flaved by constitution more than passion, and criminal from habit rather than principle; if genius, if generosity of sentiment and conduct, could plead an apology for unrestrained sensuality, it must be in the person of Margaret queen of Navarre\*.

The most splendid entertainments and demonstrations of joy succeeded to the

\* Brantome has exhausted all the powers of panegyric in her character. Those which he wantonly lavishes on her virtue, only excite laughter, but the encomiums he pays to her personal and intellectual beauty, she certainly merited. Her assemblage of charms, accomplishments, and winning qualities was unparalleled, and rendered her irresistible. She sung, and touched the lute with exquisite delicacy.—In the dance, no lady of the court was her equal, whether in the serious, or the lively kind. Her person possessed a thousand touching graces. Brantome enumerates them all, but it is her bosom on which he principally dwells, with uncommon complacency.—He had seen and admired it. “Car jamais,” says he, “n’en fut veue une si belle, ni si blanche, si pleine, ni si charnue, qu’elle montroit; et si descouverte, que la plupart des courtisans en mouroient: voire les dames, que j’ai veues aucunes de ses plus confidentes et privées, avec sa licence, la baiser par un grand ravissement.”

marriage



marriage of the king of Navarre, and were continued during several days. Amid this scene of festivity, the detestable plan of St. Bartholomew's massacre was matured, and the minute circumstances of it arranged. The intention of Charles and the Guises, was only to destroy the Hugonots, nor had their vengeance any farther object: but it is said that Catherine, hardened to the commission of crimes, and more influenced by motives of ambition than of zeal, had carried her designs to a much more flagitious, and almost incredible length. The utter extermination of the Calvinists, Guises, and Montmorencis, in one common carnage, is imputed to her even by the greatest French historians: nor is even this horrible project incompatible with, or contradictory to the genius of the queen-mother, capable of framing and executing schemes the most unexampled and detestable.

The assassination of the admiral was determined on, as a prelude to the bloody tragedy. A man named Mourevel, ren-

dered infamous by the murder of the Seigneur de Mouy one of the Calvinist leaders, was selected, as the perpetrator of this second crime. He posted himself therefore in a little chamber of the cloister of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, near which Coligni usually passed, in his return from the Louvre to his own house. The apartment in which he was concealed, belonged to a canon of the church, who had been preceptor to the duke of Guise. As the admiral walked slowly on, employed in the perusal of some papers which he held in his hand, Mourevel levelled a harquebussé from a window which commanded the street. It was loaded with two balls; one of which broke a finger of his right-hand, and the other lodged in his left arm, near the elbow. The assassin escaped instantly at another door of the cloister, and mounted a horse provided for him by the duke of Guise, on which he fled \*. Coligni,

\* Davila's account of this infamous action, agrees almost in the minutest particulars with the one here given,

ligni, without the least emotion, turning calmly towards the place from whence came the shot. “Le coup,” said he, “vient de là ;” pointing with his finger to the window. His attendants immediately conveyed him home, where his wounds were dressed.

The king was engaged at tennis in the court of the Louvre, when this news was

given. He positively attributes it to Henry duke of Guise ; who deemed himself justified, in attempting to take away the admiral’s life, by the same means, which same pretended this latter had formerly used, to assassinate Francis his father, at the siege of Orleans.

“Mourevel,” says Davila, “having shut himself  
 “up in a little room on the ground, and covered the  
 “window, which had iron bars, with an old tattered  
 “cloak, waited, with wondrous secrecy and patience,  
 “for a convenient opportunity. On the third day,  
 “he executed his commission. One of the balls  
 “took off the fore finger of Coligni’s right hand ;  
 “the second tore off the flesh from his left elbow,  
 “and broke the bone.—The doors of the house  
 “were immediately burst open, and all the apartments  
 “searched in vain. They found only a little boy ;  
 “Mourevel having already escaped by the gate “St.  
 “Antoine.”

brought him. Feigning the most furious indignation, he threw down his racket on the ground, and instantly quitted the game. With loud imprecations, he denounced vengeance on the miscreant, who had attempted the admiral's life, and named judges immediately for that purpose. After a hasty dinner, he went in person to visit him, accompanied by the queen-mother, the duke of Guise, his brother Henry, and the count de Retz. About his bed were ranged the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and all the Hugonot chiefs or adherents. Charles carried his dissimulation on this occasion, to the greatest pitch of hypocrisy. After general discourse, he entertained Coligni near an hour in private conversation. He affected to approve, and promised to comply with his advice, of attacking the Spaniards in the Low-Countries. He exhausted every art of winning blandishment, to obliterate the unfavourable impressions made on him; and pushed his subtlety so far at this interview, that Catherine herself took  
the



the alarm, and demanded of her son, with anxious earnestness, what advice the admiral had given him; to which the king replied, swearing, as was his custom, that he had counselled him to reign alone, and to be no longer governed by those about him.

All this pretended concern and condolance could not however quiet the alarm of the Hugonot party. The king of Navarre and prince of Condé waited on Charles, to request his permission to quit Paris, in which they deemed themselves no longer safe; and could scarcely be restrained by any supplications or entreaties, from executing their intention. The Calvinist nobles called for instant punishment on Mourevel; and Piles, one of them, entered the palace of the Louvre, at the head of four hundred gentlemen, threatening to revenge the assassination of Coligni.

This last step, too violent and precipitate, accelerated the massacre; the queen-mother having persuaded her son, that he  
would

would be himself the victim of his irresolution, and that his only security lay in preventing the Calvinists, by decisive and speedy measures.—Many consultations were held among the Hugonot leaders, respecting the conduct requisite to be pursued in circumstances so critical and hazardous. The Vidame of Chartres strongly urged retreat; and asserted that it was practicable before the people were armed: but Coligni's extreme reluctance to rekindle the flame of civil war, made him determine rather to die, than leave the capital; and his son-in-law Teligni strengthened, with all his influence, this sentiment.

Compelled however by the numerous symptoms which he observed of the approaching danger, the Vidame renewed his solicitations; and insisted on them with more warmth, as the admiral seemed able to support the fatigue of a removal. A gentleman, who had been present at this council, carried immediate intimation of their debates and intentions to the palace of the Tuilleries, where Charles had assembled

asssembled his little divan, in the cabinet of his mother.

The apprehension of Coligni's escape, which must involve them in new and deeper embarrassment ; strengthened by the harangue of the Marechal de Tavannes, his mortal and inveterate enemy, who loudly advised an utter and total extermination of the Hugonots, at length conquered the king's repugnance, and obtained his consent. It is said, he long hesitated on the dreadful measure, and recoil'd at its merciless consequences : but being vanquished, by the reiterated and pressing remonstrances of those about him, he exclaimed, with his usual imprecations, “ Eh bien ! puisque il le faut, “ je ne veux pas qu'il en reste un seul “ qui me le puisse reprocher.”

The completion of the design was appointed for the same night ; and the duke of Guise constituted chief, as being animated with peculiar detestation to the admiral, whom he considered as his father's murderer. The signal was to be the striking of  
the

the great bell of the palace, on which the massacre should instantly begin.

As the awful moment approached, Charles's terrors and irresolution encreased.—Some principles of remaining honour, some sentiments of humanity commiseration and virtue, which all Catherine's pernicious maxims and exhortations had not been able totally to quench, yet maintained a conflict in his bosom.—His mind, torn by the agitations of contending passions, affected and disordered his body.—Cold sweats bedewed his forehead, and his whole frame unnerved, shook, as if under the attack of an ague. He paused, upon the threshold of the enterprize. The carnage of his innocent people rose before his imagination in all its horror—Catherine exerted every endeavour to support his wavering resolution, and stifle his nobler feelings. With infinite difficulty, she forced from him a precise command for the commencement of the massacre; and having obtained it, dreading a relapse in her son, she hastened  
the



the signal more than an hour, and gave it by the bell of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois \*.

When Charles heard the dreadful knell, he was seized with new remorse. It was increased by the report of some pistols in the street; and overcome with affright, he sent instantly to command the leaders not to put the design in execution till further orders.—It was too late. The work of death was already begun; and the

\* “At midnight,” says d’Aubigné, “at the moment  
 “ when the massacre was to begin, Catherine, who  
 “ feared some change in the king, came into his  
 “ apartment. There were assembled the dukes of  
 “ Guise and Nevers, Birague keeper of the seals,  
 “ Tavannes, and the Marechal de Retz, whom Henry  
 “ duke of Anjou had conducted thither. The king  
 “ was in great emotion mingled with uncertainty;  
 “ and the queen-mother, among other arguments  
 “ which she used to encourage him, said, ‘Vaut il  
 “ pas mieux déchirer ces membres pourris que le  
 “ sein, de l’Eglise, Epouse de notre seigneur?’ She  
 “ finished by a passage taken from the sermons of the  
 “ bishop of Bitonto, ‘Che pieta lor ser crudele; che  
 “ crudelta lor ser pietosa.’” Monsieur de Thou  
 speaks in the same manner of this affair:

messengers

messengers brought back word, that the people, unchained and furious, could no longer be restrained or withheld.

—Here I pause; nor shall attempt to unveil or describe the horrors of that fatal night, engraved in characters of blood, and perpetuated by its atrocity, to times the most remote. The picture is best hidden in darkness, and is too horrible for human sight.—Yet some particulars of it will naturally be expected; some minute circumstances of Coligni's end, so long the support of the Hugonot religion and party.

He was already retired to rest, when the noise of the assassins compelled him to rise. He apprehended immediately their intentions, and prepared, as became himself, for death. A German gentleman named Besme, followed by a number of others, burst open the door, and entered his chamber. He advanced towards the admiral, holding a long rapier in his hand. Coligni looking at him with an undismayed countenance, and incapable

of resistance from the late wounds he had received, only said, “ Young man, “ respect these grey hairs, nor stain them “ with blood !” Besme hesitated a moment, and then plunged the weapon into his bosom. The rest immediately threw out his body into the court, where the duke of Guise waited for it. He regarded it in silence, without offering it any injury ; but Henry d’Angoulesme, who was with the duke, having wiped the face with a handkerchief, and recogniz’d the admiral’s features, which were deformed and covered with blood, gave the corpse a kick ; adding, with a barbarous joy to those about him——“ Courage ! my “ friends ! we have begun well : let us “ finish in the same manner \*.”

Teligni,

\* Davila has related minutely, though with some little variation, this affecting and tragical story.—

“ At the hour appointed,” says he, “ the duke of “ Guise, his uncle the duke of Aumale, and Henry “ d’Angoulesme, the king’s natural brother, attended “ by about three hundred followers, repaired to “ the admiral’s house. They were there joined by

a com-

Teligni, a youth of the most beautiful person, and the most engaging man-

“ a company of Catholic soldiers, whom the duke  
 “ of Anjou had stationed for that purpose, under  
 “ arms, and with their matches lighted. The gate  
 “ of the court, which was only guarded by a few  
 “ of the king of Navarre’s halberdiers, they instantly forced; putting both them, and all the  
 “ domestics to death without mercy. The nobles  
 “ waited below, while La Besme, a native of Lorraine, and immediate dependant of the duke of  
 “ Guise, went up to Coligni’s apartment. He was  
 “ accompanied by Achille Petrucci, a Siennese gentleman, colonel Sarlebous, and the other soldiers.

“ The admiral hearing a disturbance, got up; and  
 “ supporting his knees against the bed, one of his  
 “ servants, named Cornafon, burst, terrified, into the  
 “ room.—He demanded of him, ‘What was the noise?’  
 “ To which Cornafon hastily replied: ‘My lord,  
 “ God calls us to him;’ and instantly ran out at  
 “ another door.—The assassins entered a moment  
 “ afterwards. Coligni addressing himself to La  
 “ Besme, who had drawn his sword, said, ‘Young  
 “ man, you ought to reverence these grey hairs;  
 “ but do what you think proper: my life can only  
 “ be shortened a very little.’—He had scarce spoke  
 “ these words, when La Besme plunged the sword into  
 “ his breast, and the others dispatched him with  
 “ their daggers.”



ners, who had married Coligni's daughter, was massacred on that night, and at the same time. But the fate of the count de la Rochefoucault was attended with circumstances which excite peculiar pity.—He had spent the whole evening with the king at play; and Charles, touched with pity for a nobleman so amiable, whom he even loved, would willingly have rescued him from the general destruction.—He ordered him to remain all night in his privy chamber; but the count, who apprehended that he only meant to divert himself at his expence, by some boyish pastimes, refused, and retired to his own apartment. “I see,” said Charles, “it is the will of God that he should perish!” When the persons sent to destroy him knocked at the door, he opened it himself, apprehending it to have been the king. He was instantly dispatched with the daggers of the assassins, who burst in.

The count de Guerchy, wrapping his cloak about his arm, died sword-in-hand;

hand; and killed several of his murderers before he fell himself.—Soubise, covered with wounds, after a long and gallant defence, was finally put to death under the queen-mother's windows. The ladies of the court, from a savage and horrible curiosity, went to view his naked body, disfigured and bloody.—The Marechal de Tavannes, one of the most violent in the execution of the massacre, ran through the streets, crying, “ Let blood ! let blood ! “ Bleeding is equally wholesome in the “ month of August, as in the month of “ May ! ” Even the king himself, forgetful of the sacred duties which he owed to his people, and to humanity, was personally aiding on that night, to the barbarous extermination of his miserable subjects. It is said, he fired on them from the windows of his palace with a long harquebussé; and attempted to kill the runaways from the “ Fauxbourg St. Germain,” who endeavoured to escape.

The admiral's body was treated with indignities which dishonour human nature,

ture, and which I am even ashamed to recite. An Italian first cut off his head, which was presented to Catherine of Medicis. The populace then exhausted all their brutal and unrestrained fury on the trunk. They cut off the hands, after which it was left on a dunghill. In the afternoon, they took it up again, dragged it three days in the dirt, then on the banks of the Seine, and lastly, carried it to Montfauçon. It was hung up on a gibbet by the feet with an iron chain, and a fire lighted under it, with which it was half roasted. In this dreadful situation, the king went with several of his courtiers to survey it; and as the corpse smelt very disagreeably, some of them turning away their heads, "The body of a dead enemy," said Charles, "smells always well!"—The remains of Coligni, after so many indignities, were at length taken down privately during a very dark night, by order of the Marechal de Montmorenci, and interred with the utmost privacy, at Chantilli.

Many accidents and causes conduced, notwithstanding the rigorous orders for an universal slaughter, to rescue numbers of the Hugonots. The king himself excepted two from the common destruction. The first was his surgeon, the celebrated Ambrose Paré, whose superior and uncommon skill proved the preservation of his life. Charles commanded him to remain in his own wardrobe, during that dreadful night. The other person was his nurse, to whom he was warmly attached, and never refused any request.—The duke of Guise himself preserved more than a hundred, whom he concealed during the violence of the storm, in his own palace.

The Montmorencis, all which family had been inrolled in the fatal list, and devoted by Catherine to death, were secured by the departure of the Marechal, their eldest brother, who, it was feared, might severely revenge the slaughter of his relations.—The tears and entreaties of Mademoiselle de Chateauneuf, prevailed on her lover the duke of Anjou to spare the  
Marechal



Marechal de Cossé, who was allied to her by blood.—Biron, grand master of the artillery, and afterwards so renown'd in the wars of Henry the fourth, having pointed several culverines over the gate of the arsenal, stopped in some measure the fury of the catholics, and afforded an asylum to many of his friends.

The count de Montgomeri, with near an hundred gentlemen, who were lodged in the “Fauxbourg St. Germain,” escaped on horseback half naked, into Normandy, and eluded their merciless enemies.—Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, were exempted from the general carnage, though not without violent debates in the council \*. Charles ordered them both into his presence, and commanded them, with horrible menaces and imprecations,

\* Davila declares, that the duke of Guise strenuously endeavoured to have these two princes included in the massacre; but that Charles and the queen-mother, thinking it an action so abominable and detestable to future ages, to imbrue their hands in the

imprecations, to abjure their religion, on pain of instant death.—The king of Navarre obeyed, but the prince obstinately refused to renounce his principles. Charles, frantic with indignation, said to him in three words, “Mort, Messe, ou Bastille!”—This threat was effectual; and the young prince, terrified into submission, complied with the necessity of his situation\*.

During

blood of their own relations, that no reasons of state could in any degree justify or authorize it, peremptorily refused.—He adds, that the king was peculiarly inclined to this conduct, from personal affection, and regard to the many virtues of Henry king of Navarre.

\* The account which Margaret queen of Navarre has given us of the night of St. Bartholomew, is not only so authentic, but so highly interesting, that I shall make a considerable extract from it.—On the evening, previous to its commencement, Margaret was at the queen her mother’s Couchers, who ordered her to retire.—“As I made my courtesy,” says she, “my sister of Lorraine” (Claude, princess of France, married to the duke of Lorraine) “took hold of my arm, and stopping me, burst into tears, “My God, “said she, sister, do not go!” which frightened me “extremely. The queen my mother perceived it; “and

During seven days the massacre did not cease, though its extreme fury spent itself in

“ and calling my sister to her, reprehended her very  
 “ severely; and forbid her to say any thing to me. I  
 “ saw plainly that they differed, but could not hear  
 “ their words. The queen commanded me a second  
 “ time rudely to go to bed. My sister, melting into  
 “ tears, bid me good night, without daring to say  
 “ any thing else; and I went out, all trembling and  
 “ terrified, without being able to divine what I had  
 “ to fear.”

Scarce was Margaret asleep, when a person came to the door, and knocking with extreme violence at it, cried out, “ Navarre! Navarre!” The nurse, who lay in her apartment, rose immediately to open it, apprehending it to be Henry her husband. A gentleman, named Tersan, covered with wounds, and pursued by four archers, burst in, threw himself on her bed, and clasped her round the body, beseeching her to save his life. She obtained it with difficulty, and ordered his wounds to be carefully dressed.

The young queen, frightened into agonies at this horrid sight, put on a night-gown, and ran to her sister the duchess of Lorraine’s chamber. As she entered it, a gentleman, named Bourse, was stabbed with a halberd, at two steps from her. Overcome with this second barbarity, she fainted into the arms of Nançay, captain of the guards. She declares in

in the two first. Every enormity, every profanation, every atrocious crime, which zeal, revenge, and cruel policy are capable of influencing mankind to commit, stain the dreadful registers of this unhappy period. More than five thousand persons of all ranks perished by various species of deaths. The Seine was loaded with carcases floating on it; and Charles fed his eyes from the windows of the Louvre, with this unnatural and abominable spectacle of horror. A butcher, who entered the palace during the heat of the massacre, boasted to his sovereign, baring his bloody arm, that he had dispatched himself a hundred and fifty.

Catherine of Medecis, the presiding demon who scattered destruction in so many

her Memoirs, that she was sprinkled all over with blood from these miserable victims. Nançay informed her of the king of Navarre's safety, who was at that time in Charles's closet. She went thither; and throwing herself at her brother's and the queen-mother's feet, implored, and at length procured the pardon of Miossans and Armagnac, two Hugonots in her husband's service.

shapes,



shapes, was not melted into pity at the view of such complicated and extensive misery. She is said to have gazed with a savage satisfaction on Coligni's head, which was brought her. Some days after the slaughter had ceased, she carried her son to the "Hotel de Ville," where Briquemaut, an old Hugonot gentleman of seventy-two years, and Cavagnes, master of requests, were executed in the "Place du Greve." They had escaped during the carnage of their adherents, but being afterwards discovered, were condemned to dye. By a refinement in barbarity which impresses with horror, the king was desirous of enjoying their last agonies. As it was night before they were conducted to the gibbet, he commanded torches to be held up to the faces of the criminals; and studiously remarked the effects which the approach of death produced upon their features.

The admiral's effigy was likewise drawn upon a sledge to the same place, and hung upon a gallows; nor had they forgot to  
put

put a toothpick into the mouth of the figure, as Coligni when alive usually appeared with one.—The dreadful example of Paris was followed but too faithfully through all the provinces, into which similar orders had been dispatched. Some few great and exalted spirits, whose names the latest posterity shall bless, refused to comply with so infamous a mandate, tho' signed by the king's hand, and preserved the Hugonots from outrage in their respective governments \*.

\* In the cities of Lyons, Orleans, Rouen, Bourges, Angers, and Thoulouse, the royal orders for massacring the Protestants were most implicitly obeyed. In Provence, the count de Tende absolutely refused to pay any subjection to so detestable a command; "for which," says Davila, "he was secretly dispatched soon after at Avignon; and, as commonly believed, by a commission from the king."—The glorious answer of the viscount d'Ortez to Charles the ninth, is never to be forgotten.—It was to this effect. "Sire, I have read the letter, enjoining a massacre of the Hugonots, to the inhabitants of Bayonne. Your majesty has many faithfully devoted subjects in this city, but not one executioner."

Charles's

Charles's perplexed and contradictory conduct after the massacre, plainly bespeaks his own consciousness of its infamous nature, and detestable principles. He first accused Henry duke of Guise as the sole author and perpetrator of it, in his circular letters; and afterwards avowed himself as such. The court, fatiated with the sacrifice of so many Hugonots, did not believe it possible that they could rise again in arms, without leaders or any means of support.—But this confidence deluded and deceived them,—Though covered with dismay, and oppressed by superior numbers, their religious zeal, which this cruel persecution had heightened and confirmed, rendered them invincible. They stood on their defence in several provinces, erected anew the standard of revolt, and resisted with success the efforts of their victorious enemies.

La Rochelle, the grand asylum of Calvinism, shut its gates upon the royal forces, and prepared to sustain itself, in case of a siege. The duke of Anjou was sent

sent at the head of a prodigious army to invest it, and carried with him almost all the nobility. The duke of Alençon, his youngest brother, together with the king of Navarre, and prince of Condé, were likewise in the camp. Catherine had even projected the dissolution of her daughter Margaret's marriage; but the princess herself opposed this intention, and refused to consent to it\*.

There

\* Margaret, in her Memoirs, has given the most minute relation of her mother's measures for procuring a divorce. She demanded of her daughter, whether Henry had consummated the nuptials on the bridal night; and asked her, "Si son mari étoit homme?" "parceque si cela n'étoit pas, ce seroit un moyen de la demarier."—The answer which Margaret pretends she made to this question, is such as must excite laughter. She assured Catherine, with all the naïveté of an innocence the most uninformed and spotless, that "she besought her majesty to believe that she did not understand what was asked her; but that she would remain with the husband they had given her."—"Me doutant bien," adds she, "que la separation n'avoit pour but, que la perte de mon mari."—It is

hard,



There are few examples in modern history of a siege carried on with greater vigour, or sustained with more determined obstinacy, than that of La Rochelle. In vain did the duke of Anjou blockade it on every side. His reiterated and bloody attacks, in which vast numbers of his soldiery fell, neither terrified the inhabitants, or disposed them to capitulate. The intrigues, dissensions, and opposite factions, with which the royal camp was

hard, and even ungenerous, to assign any other motive for this conduct in the queen of Navarre, than that of humanity, as she never loved Henry during the whole course of her life.

That the marriage was consummated, is a point beyond all doubt, since Henry himself avowed it, tho' the confession was injurious to his interests. Many years after, when his divorce was solicited in the court of Rome, he was informed, that he had only to imitate the example set him by Louis the twelfth, of denying the consummation of his nuptials. "No," said Henry, "it is an assertion I cannot make; nor is it credible, that a man of my constitution, and a woman of the princess's complexion, could possibly fail to have compleated the nuptial rites."

filled, heightened the obstacles to his success.

Francis duke of Alençon, youngest of Henry the second's children, began to display his character, and formed a new party in the distracted state. In his person, he was little, ungraceful, and deformed. Turbulent and restless, he beheld with envious discontent his brother Henry's superior glory, and early trophies. Anxious to eclipse him by whatever means, and unendowed by nature with shining or estimable qualities, he united himself with the Hugonots and king of Navarre, to revenge the admiral's death. Irresolute, capricious, and incapable of firmness on great occasions, he ever deserted his friends in distress. Void of faith and honour, no reliance could be reposed on his promises or engagements. His rank as prince of the blood, and his personal courage, which was undisputed, counterbalanced all these defects and vices; nor was he altogether destitute of gene-

rous and better feelings, which sometimes broke out at intervals \*.

His practices and connexion with the king of Navarre were soon divulged, and excited a great alarm at court. Charles sent him a strict prohibition to quit the camp on any pretence; and ordered the duke of Anjou to hasten by every means the reduction of La Rochelle, because he wanted the troops for the protection of his own person.

\* The duke of Alençon had connected himself very closely with Coligni previous to the massacre, of which he was totally innocent and uninformed. He wept his death, and appeared deeply affected by it. The queen-mother, desirous of erasing these sentiments from his mind, caused a part of the admiral's journal, which had been brought her, to be read to him, in which he had strongly advised Charles, not to give his brothers too much authority, or assign them a large establishment. "See," said she, "what counsel your good friend gives the king!" "I know not," replied the duke, "whether he loved me much; but I am convinced that none except a man most faithful to his majesty, and most zealous for the state, would be the author of such advice."

Already

Already the miserable king began to awake, though slowly, from the delirium into which his mother's fatal maxims had plunged him. The horror of St. Bartholomew's night remained indelibly impressed on his imagination. Remorse, and the keen sensations of a heart originally undebased, imperceptibly consumed him. The gaiety and complacency that used to characterise him, appeared no longer in his countenance. A fixed and melancholy gloom, which indicated the corroding pangs within, sat upon his features. He beheld the ignominy and detestation with which his unparalleled barbarity and perfidy had marked him to the latest posterity; nor could he dissemble his resentment of Catherine's abominable counsels, which had induced him to violate the sacred laws of honour and humanity. The queen-mother having one day reproved him for his furious passion with some of his grooms, and told him, that he would do better to exert that anger against the rebels who caused the deaths of so many



many faithful and loyal subjects before La Rochelle; he replied, “Madame, qui en est cause que vous? Par la mort ..... vous êtes cause de tout!”

While these seeds of animosity began to generate between Charles and his mother, and while Henry exhausted his army in ineffectual attempts upon La Rochelle, the news arrived of this latter prince's election to the crown of Poland. It was undesired and unintended on the part of Catherine and her favourite son. The duke of Anjou, who ever considered himself as immediate heir to the crown, while his brother had no male issue by the queen, and who had from infancy been accustomed to the voluptuous dissipations of the politest court in Europe, regarded with a sort of horror the idea of going to reign over a barbarous people, so far removed from his native country. He had endeavoured by every secret means, to traverse and counteract the success of the negotiation, which was to set him on the Polish throne: but the bishop of Valence, more

regardful of his sovereign's orders, and his own honour, than of Catherine's or Henry's wishes, acted with so much vigour and address in the Divan, that he was chosen king.—This intelligence formed an honourable pretext for withdrawing his troops, wearied and broken with so unsuccessful a siege. Deputies were appointed on either side; and a general pacification was at length concluded, not only for the city of La Rochelle, but throughout the whole kingdom, on terms less favourable to the Hugonots, than any of the three preceding treaties.

The duke of Anjou having terminated this negotiation, embarked on the royal galleys; and landing at Nantes, proceeded along the Loire to Paris. He was every where received with royal honours. The Polish ambassadors, twelve in number, made their solemn entry into the capital soon after. The decree which elected Henry to the throne, was taken out of a silver box, sealed with a hundred and ten seals of Prelates, Palatines, and Castellans,

lans. Charles, seated on a scaffold, clad in the regal robes, and accompanied by all the grandees of the court, was present at this ceremony. One of the ambassadours opened and read the decree; on which the king rose, and embraced his brother the new sovereign. Henry then kissed the duke of Alençon, and king of Navarre; after which all the noblemen of the court made him the usual congratulations and respects. Catherine displayed all her magnificence and delicacy of taste on this occasion, in the splendid diversions and entertainments with which she honoured her son's accession to the Polish diadem\*.

Charles,

\* Brantome has given us a minute description of Catherine's banquets and exhibitions of amusement, on the arrival of the ambassadours.—Sixteen ladies of the court representing the sixteen Provinces of France, habited with the most perfect propriety in dresses emblematical of their characters, formed a ballet and dance. It was performed in the palace of the Tuilleries. As far as we are able to judge, scarce any of Louis the fourteenth's superb carousals were superior in elegance of imagination, in brilliance, or grandeur

Charles, who had embraced the firm resolution of reigning himself, and adopting more salutary and beneficent measures, received with extreme satisfaction the news of his brother's election to a foreign throne. He had long perceived the error which his mother's counsels had induced him to commit, of entrusting to Henry so extensive an authority. He beheld himself released from a rival, who became each year more obnoxious. From impatience to see him gone, he hastened his departure with a visible anxiety and uneasiness: but the king of Poland protracted and delayed it, under a thousand

of effect, to those of Catherine of Medicis, so much earlier.

Margaret queen of Navarre was the animating soul of these gallant diversions. Her beauty, gaiety, wit, grace, and voluptuous air which breathed and inspired desire, rendered her the most fascinating princess in the world. Lasco, one of the Polish embassy, being presented to her, was so overcome with the blaze of her attractions, that he broke out into the most passionate exclamations of rapture, astonishment and homage at the sight of so divine a woman.



pretexts.—It was not only Catherine's tender and maternal fondness for him; it was not only the charms of a luxurious court, of a power scarce less than royal, or the expectation of the crown of France, which detained him:—A passion more tyrannic, more violent and insuperable, rendered him deaf to the voice of glory, or the suggestions of reason. He was enamoured of the princess of Condé; and his heart naturally soft, enervate, and debased by effeminate pleasures, tried in vain to exert itself against the delicious intoxication.

Mary of Cleves, married to Henry prince of Condé, was only seventeen years of age. She possessed attractions and personal beauties the most winning and irresistible. Her mind, improved and elegant, corresponded to her external charms; and her heart, formed to taste the delights and excesses of a mutual passion, had not been able to resist so accomplished a lover, as the hero of Jarnac and Moncontour, covered with laurels. A sense of honour,

a regard to the nuptial ties so lately celebrated, had long supported her sliding virtue. Henry, master of all the wiles, which such a design inspires and dictates, employed the most seductive methods to obtain the gratification of his wishes. His sister, the queen of Navarre, became subservient to the possession of his beloved mistress. Even the duke of Guise, forgetting his natural haughtiness, and united to the king of Poland by the closest friendship, did not hesitate to aid him with all his eloquence. His uncle the cardinal of Lorraine, was the first to persuade and induce him to undertake this office, and procure his own sister-in-law for Henry. Overcome by so importunate a suit, the princess yielded at length. The first decisive interview between herself and the king took place at the Louvre; and she was delivered up to him as a victim by Margaret and the duke of Guise\*.

Amid

\* Desportes, who has immortalized the amours of the duke of Anjou with Mary of Cleves, relates this interesting

Amid the first transporting enjoyments which succeeded; amid the delirious excesses to which the two lovers abandoned themselves, neither ambition nor any inferior duties were heard. A distant sceptre, which could only be purchased by a removal from the object of his tenderness, did not in any degree rouse the intoxicated king, or appear to him worthy the sacrifice he must make to it.—A necessity more cruel, an authority more resistless, compelled him to quicken his departure. Charles, rendered more impatient, began to menace, if he longer procrastinated it; and informed the queen-mother with his usual vehemence, that he would not permit the king of Poland's stay, and that one or other must instantly quit the kingdom.

interesting story, and describes the *decisive* interview of the lovers, in a poem called Cleophon. Henry is there named Eurilas; the princess of Condé, Olympia; Margaret of Valois, Fleur de Lys; Bussi d'Amboise, Nireus. The duke of Guise, and his mistress Madame de Sauve, are characterised under the names of Floridant and Camilla.

Henry began his preparations, and ordered all his equipage to be loaded, and attendants to be ready. Still he did not go.—The duke of Guise, his intimate confident, flattered him with hopes of Charles's death; and even offered, if he was determined to remain, to protect him against his resentment with fifty thousand men. Three days elapsed in this uncertainty.—Irritated at length to fury, and persuaded that Catherine chiefly prevented the king of Poland's journey, perhaps from some treasonable and dangerous intentions in his favour, Charles no longer observed any measures with his mother. He ordered the door of his cabinet to be shut upon her, and began to meditate more decisive and desperate designs against herself and son.

These open marks of displeasure terrified Catherine. She implored the king of Poland to delay no longer, if he regarded his own safety. Henry consented, though with extreme reluctance. The whole court accompanied him; and  
Charles,



Charles, more from motives of circumspection and prudence, than affection, was among the number. He could not however conduct him to the frontier, as he desired. A slow fever, attended with violent giddiness in the head, and excruciating pains about his heart and stomach, compelled him to stop at Vitry in Champagne. The queen-mother, the duke of Alençon, with the king and queen of Navarre, and a great train of nobles, continued their rout with Henry to Blamont in Lorraine. Here took place the separation between him and Catherine. She held him long in her arms, unable to bid him the last adieu. Her sobs and tears interrupted her voice. She loved this favourite son with a warmth of affection unequalled. Among the expressions of support and comfort which she used, to diminish the acuteness of his grief on this exile from his country ; “ Allez, mon fils ;” said she, “ vous n’y demeurerez pas long tems !” The ambiguity of this prediction, Charles’s illness accompanied with extraordinary symptoms,

symptoms, the known quarrel which had preceded it, the queen-mother's partiality to the king of Poland; all these circumstances gave rise to reports and suspicions of poison, though probably ill-founded and unjust.

The king's maladies were more reasonably attributed to natural causes. All the French historians agree in declaring, that ever since the massacre of Paris, he had betrayed marks of disorder, agitation, and distress.—“ I saw his majesty,” says Brantome, “ on my return from the siege of “ La Rochelle, and was struck with the “ prodigious change I observed in him.” Besides this concealed principle of disease, he had injured and impaired his constitution by too violent and laborious exercises. It was said, that his lungs were affected by constantly blowing the horn at the chace. He used to continue at tennis five or six hours without intermission, which extremely agitated and heated his blood. He became incapable of sleeping except at intervals; and his slumbers were restless and disordered. These conjoined seeds  
of

of distemper conducted him apparently, though slowly, to the tomb, and might fully account for, and justify Catherine's prophetic anticipation of his end.

Henry, meanwhile, accompanied with several of the first nobility, and a suite of five hundred gentlemen, crossed the whole Germanic empire; and arrived at Miezerich, the first city of his Polish dominions, in the depth of winter. All the princes, through whose territories he passed, endeavoured to outvie each other in the honours they paid to so illustrious a stranger. He was received at Cracow with every demonstration of joy, and public festivity. His beautiful and majestic person, his condescending and courteous manners, his unbounded and profuse liberality to all ranks of people, rendered him in the beginning almost idolized by his new subjects: but these external and dazzling endowments, calculated to charm at first view, soon disappeared. He grew splenetic, melancholy, and reserved.

Disgusted with the barbarous customs  
and

and character of the Poles, he was no longer easy of access, or so affable towards them, as on his arrival. He remained whole days shut up in his closet, abandoned to chagrin, and depressed with disquietude, at not receiving the letters he expected from France. He spent part of his time in perusing the billets of the princess of Condé, which he kissed and bathed with tears. She was ever present to his troubled imagination, and maintained her empire over his affections. He wrote letters to her of fond attachment entirely in his own blood, and filled with protestations of inviolable fidelity. Desportes the poet, who attended him to Cracow, nourished his passion by continual sonnets and elegies on his beloved mistress. His ennui and dejection of spirits were still more encreased by the distasteful proposition which the senate made him of marrying Anne Jagellon, sister to the deceased monarch Sigismund Augustus, a princess of an unamiable person, and already advanced in years.

It



It was natural to suppose, that the departure of the king of Poland would tend to diffuse a tranquillity over the court and kingdom ; but Charles's reign seem'd destined to every species of civil commotion. The duke of Alençon, unquiet, and ever forming schemes of ambition or aggrandizement, which he afterwards abandoned from fickleness and irresolution, rekindled the flame of expiring sedition. The genius of Calvinism, springing like a phoenix from its own ashes, re-appeared in every quarter of France ; and undismayed by the late dreadful extermination of its votaries, animated them to new efforts against the government.

The king's vigour began to decay just as he entered the prime of life, and appeared to promise happier times. His capacity, naturally clear and discerning, made him at length see the train of errors and crimes, into which his youth had been led. All his actions indicated the resolution he had taken, to govern by other and opposite principles from the past.

past. He applied himself in person to the affairs of state. He expressed the most anxious desire to relieve his people from the many calamities they had experienced since his accession to the crown. In opposition to the advice of several of his ministers, he discharged them from a third part of the taxes, and would only keep three companies of the regiment of guards about him; the rest were disbanded.

Though he detested Calvinism and the Hugonots, he had yet determined to disgrace and banish from his presence and councils, the advisers of massacre and bloodshed. He intended to restore to his parliaments the administration of justice, as their rightful province; to repress and abase the two houses of Guise and Montmorenci; and renouncing his too eager prosecution of the chase and other dissipations, to bend his whole attention to the more important and glorious labours of a great monarch.—In vain did he form these salutary and patriotic plans.

The

The inexorable hand of death was upon him.—As if marked out by the wrath of heaven, and destined to pay the forfeit of St. Bartholomew's bloody night, he perceptibly and rapidly approached the end of his days, and descended to the tomb 'ere he had yet expiated his past offences.

Meanwhile the Hugonots, emboldened by the duke of Anjou's removal, and the king's languid state of health, which incapacitated him for his usual exertion of vigour, rose again in arms. La Noue and Montgomeri in whom survived the genius of Condé and Coligni, re-assembled their scattered partizans. The duke of Alençon, to whom Charles had refused the post of lieutenant-general, was privy to their enterprize. Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, had promised to declare openly in their favour; and many noblemen of the court were secretly disposed to join the insurgents.—The duke of Alençon even engaged to quit the court, and put himself at their

10

head:

head: but de Chaumont, who, with a body of cavalry, had approached the palace of St. Germain to facilitate his escape, as preconcerted, having mistaken the day, and anticipated it more than a week, the prince, timid and undetermined, had not the courage to execute his convention.

La Mole, his principal favourite, conscious that the design could not long remain concealed, went instantly and revealed the whole to the queen-mother. The court was filled with confusion and alarm. Catherine, affecting unreal terror, with intent to render the conspirators more odious, fled at midnight in the utmost disorder, and was followed by most of the ladies and courtiers. Charles himself did not remove before the ensuing day, when he went to lodge at the "Bois de Vincennes." His brother Francis and the king of Navarre were likewise conducted thither, not as prisoners, but under a sort of guard who carefully watched them. They were both examined in presence of the king and queen-mother.

The



The first behaved with the meanest pusillanimity, trembling, and as a criminal: but Henry, intrepid and unshaken, answered the interrogatories put to him, rather as an injured than a guilty person, and refused to make any confession injurious to his friends or followers.

Charles's maladies, which had in some degree lain dormant during the winter, revived with double violence on the approach of spring. His brother's and the king of Navarre's unquiet practices, superadded to the renewal of the civil war with the Hugonots, touched him deeply, and irritated the other diseases which preyed on his enfeebled constitution.—  
 “ At least,” said he, “ they might have  
 “ waited for my death. It is too much  
 “ to distress me now, debilitated by  
 “ illness \* !”

Catherine,

\* It was not possible, says Brantome, to ascertain what was the king's disorder; so various and uncommon were the symptoms. These are his own words which follow.

“ Car il lui survint une fièvre catartique, qui tantôt  
 VOL. II, M “ étoit

Catherine, ever attentive to her own interests, and foreseeing that the king's end could not be very distant, with her usual sagacity and precaution, began to concert measures for securing to herself the future regency. Her son's declining health, and incapacity of personal application to affairs, having in a degree restored to her that authority, of which he had previously determined, and even began to deprive her; she exerted it to render herself mistress of those persons, who might otherwise trouble and oppose her seizure of the supreme power, in case of Charles's death.

La Mole, and the Count de Coconas, an Italian nobleman, both favourites of

“ étoit quarte, tantôt continue : et pensoit monsieur  
 “ Mafille, son premier médecin, qu'il se porteroit de  
 “ bien en mieux, ainsi que la fièvre diminueroit.”—  
 He adds, that the duke of Alençon and king of Navarre's collusion with the rebels aggravated all the symptoms of his complaint; and that from that time his majesty grew much worse.—“ Dont on en soupçonna,” adds he, “ quelque poison, enchantement, et enforcellement.”

the

the duke of Alençon, were arrested. The former denied every thing imputed to his charge, and persisted invariably firm: but the Count, flattered with the fallacious hope of life and a large recompence, being examined in the royal presence, confessed all he knew, and even accused the Marechals de Montmorenci and Cossé, as accomplices in the conspiracy. This deposition, though probably extorted only by the expectation of escaping an ignominious punishment, furnished Catherine with the pretext she wanted.

A circumstance which very strongly marks the superstition of the age, (prone to the use of charms, and addicted to sorcery,) served to hasten the execution of La Mole and Coconas. A little image, composed of wax, was found in the house of the former; the heart of which was pierced through with a needle in many places. It was pretended that this waxen figure represented the king, whom La Mole had devoted to death and bewitched. He denied the imputation, and asserted, that

he had procured it from Cosmo Ruggieri, a Florentine, who had followed the queen-mother into France, and professed magic or divination. Ruggieri, interrogated in turn, confirmed La Mole's assurances; and added, that the intent of the amulet was to gain the affections of a lady, to whom that gentleman was devoted\*.

Notwith-

\* The age was infected to the greatest degree with a belief in magic, nor did this madness terminate till Louis the fourteenth's reign. Catherine was peculiarly credulous on that point. She always carried about her, cabalistical characters, written on the skin of an infant born dead. Several talismans and amulets were found in her cabinet after her death. She consulted an astrologer, on the fortunes of all her children. Favin, in his history of Navarre, relates a curious anecdote on this head. "The queen," says he, "early applied to a magician to know the destiny of her sons. He made her see in a magic mirror, the number of years each would reign, by the number of turns they made. Francis the second, Charles the ninth, and Henry the third, passed successively in review before her. She even saw Henry duke of Guise, who disappeared on a sudden; and Henry the fourth, who made twenty-four turns. This  
" encreased



Notwithstanding this defence, he was executed some days after, with the Count de Coconas, in the "Greve" at Paris. Their bodies, quartered, were placed on wheels, and their heads fixed on two poles. La Mole was peculiarly acceptable to, and beloved by the queen of Navarre, as his accomplice was by the duchess of Nevers: and it is confidently asserted by many of the cotemporary historians, that these two princesses caused the heads of their lovers to be taken down, on the night consequent to their execution, and interred them with their own hands in the chapel of St. Martin \*.

The

"increased her hatred and aversion to the king of Navarre."—Cosmo Ruggieri, of whom I made mention, was sent to the galleys; but Catherine soon after took him out of that servitude, to make use of the secrets which she supposed him to possess. He died in high repute, at Paris, under Louis the thirteenth's reign, in 1615.

\* Henry the fourth, in his manifesto presented to the pope, expressly asserts this extraordinary fact, as

The two accused noblemen, Montmorenci and Cossé, either from a reliance on their own innocence, or a confidence in their rank and authority, came immediately to court, to justify themselves from the supposed treason attributed to them: but they were committed by Catherine to the Bastile; and the Parisians furnished, with acclamations of joy, eight hundred men to prevent their escape. Orders were likewise issued for the arrest of Henry prince of Condé, who, as governor of Picardy, resided at Amiens:—but he eluded his enemies; and quitting the city in dis-

well as the intrigue preceding it.—“The Duchess  
 “ of Nevers,” says he, “being attached to the Count  
 “ de Coconas, persuaded her friend the queen of  
 “ Navarre to commence an amour with La Mole,  
 “ their common confident,” “pour lui épargner  
 “ le chagrin de garder les manteaux, pendant qu’ils  
 “ étoient ensemble.”—“The connection was of  
 “ short duration. The two lovers left their heads on  
 “ a scaffold; and their mistresses, having caused  
 “ them to be taken down, put them in a coach,  
 “ and buried them in St. Martin’s chapel, below  
 “ Montmartre.”

guise,

guise, arrived safe at Strasbourg, where he solemnly abjured the Catholic religion, and made public profession of Calvinism.

In Normandy, the Hugonots, vigorously pressed by the Marechal de Matignon, were almost every where reduced to lay down their arms. The count de Montgomeri, so long inured to war, and one of their greatest chieftains, was necessitated to surrender himself to Matignon, who invested him in the town of Domfront. His life was promised him: but the queen-mother, who had determined to sacrifice this victim to the manes of her husband, disregarded the convention, and caused him to be executed after the death of Charles the ninth.

The king began to sink apace under his accumulated disorders, which increased in violence and inveteracy. He long endeavoured to stem their attacks; but his strength diminishing daily, at length compelled him to keep his bed, at the palace in the "Bois de Vincennes." Catherine, improving the opportunity, when her

son's vigour of mind began to decline under the pressure of sickness, tried to induce him to invest her with the regency. As long as Charles retained in any degree his usual faculties, he persisted invariably to deny her this proof of his confidence; and could only be persuaded to grant her letters to the governors of the different provinces, which enjoined, that, "during his illness, and in case it pleased God to dispose of him, they should obey his mother till the king of Poland's return."

One of the most awful and affecting pictures, which can be held up to human survey, is that of Charles the ninth expiring.—He was cut off in the flower of his age, by a death almost unprecedented, and accompanied with circumstances the most exciting of horror and pity. During the two last weeks of his life, nature seemed to make extraordinary efforts to surmount the distemper. He trembled, and was contracted in all his limbs, by sudden paroxysms. His acute pains suf-  
fered



ferred him not to enjoy any repose, or remain in one posture scarce a moment. He was bathed in his own blood, which oozed out of his pores, and at all the passages of his body, in prodigious quantity. His constitution, naturally sound and robust, supported him some time, against the progress of this cruel and insurmountable disease.

Only three days before his end, the queen-mother having informed his majesty, that the count de Montgomeri was taken prisoner, he received the news without any mark of joy, or change of countenance. “*Quoi! mon fils,*” said she, “*ne vous rejouissez vous point de la prise de celui qui a tué votre pere?*” — “*I am no longer interested,*” answered the expiring prince, “*about that, or any other affair.*” Catherine regarded this apathy and indifference as the infallible prognostic of his approaching dissolution.

On the morning of the day when he breathed his last, she availed herself of this debilitated state of mind, to press him  
again

again for a nomination to the regency. He complied with her request, though rather by compulsion and weakness, than choice; and she immediately dispatched other letters into the different parts of the kingdom, announcing the king's pleasure.—Yet only a few hours before he expired, Charles openly gave marks of his disapprobation with his mother. Henry king of Navarre having approached his bed, he embraced him many times; and after other demonstrations of amity and attachment, he said to him; “ Je  
 “ me fie en vous de ma femme, et de ma  
 “ fille. Je vous les recommande, et Dieu  
 “ vous gardera ! Mais ne vous fiez pas  
 “ à—.” Catherine, fearing he was about to name herself, interrupted him with—  
 “ Monsieur, ne dites pas cela.”—“ Je le  
 “ dois dire,” answered the dying monarch,  
 “ car c’est la verité.”

When he found the near approaches of mortality, he prepared himself for it with perfect composure and equanimity of mind. He ordered the duke of Alençon  
 and

and king of Navarre into his presence. Birague the chancellor, Monsieur de Sauve secretary of state, and the Cardinal of Bourbon, with several other nobles, were admitted.—He addressed himself to them, with the earnestness of a person about to quit the world. He declared his brother, the king of Poland, successor to the crown, the Salic law excluding his only child, a daughter, from the throne. He implored the duke of Alençon not to molest, or attempt to impede his elder brother's entry into the kingdom ; and obliged all present to take the oath of allegiance to the absent sovereign, and of obedience to Catherine, 'till his arrival.

He commanded the Viscount d'Auchy, captain of the guards, to look well to his charge, and to preserve his unshaken loyalty to the king of Poland. He requested Poquenot, lieutenant of the Swiss guards, to make his dying recommendations to his allies the thirteen Cantons. Above all, he charged Monsieur de la Tour, master of his wardrobe, to carry his ten-  
der

der and constant remembrances to his mistress, the beautiful Mary Touchet, whom he had long loved.—These duties performed, he fell into an extreme weakness, and yielded his last breath about three o'clock in the afternoon. He wanted only thirty-one days, to have accomplished his twenty-fifth year\*.

The reports of poison were again renewed, and Catherine of Medicis was accused of her son's death: but from this horrible and unnatural crime an impartial justice must acquit her†.

Charles

\* Brantome has furnished me with several circumstances relative to the illness and death of Charles the ninth. He was in the court at that time. These are his words.—“ Il mourut le propre jour de la Pen-  
 “ tecoste, l'an 1574, trois heures après midi, sur le  
 “ point que les médecins et chirurgiens, et tous ceux  
 “ de la cour le pensoient se mieux porter : car le jour  
 “ avant il se portoit bien ; et nous croyions qu'il s'en  
 “ alloit guery ; mais nous donnâmes de garde que sur  
 “ le matin il commença à sentir la mort, laquelle  
 “ il fit très belle et digne d'un grand Roi.”

† It may be curious, however, to enter a little into this disquisition. Most of the writers of that period  
 make



Charles left by his queen only one legitimate daughter, named Mary-Elizabeth, who

make mention of the suspicion, but in general exculpate the queen-mother, and pronounce her guiltless. So abominable an action, if true, would probably have been authenticated and handed down to us by some incontestable authority. Davila never once hints poison; but expressly attributes his death to “an illness occasioned by too great exercise in running, hunting, wrestling, and riding the great horse; of all which recreations he was immoderately fond.”—In another place he says, “The king’s life was now hastening fast to its period. He had begun to spit blood some months before; and being exhausted with a slow, continued, internal fever, he had entirely lost his strength.”—He recounts the particulars of his calling into his chamber the princes and great officers of state, previous to his death—and adds, that “Charles having dismissed all present, with weighty and affecting admonitions, still continued to hold his mother’s hand fast in his own, and in that posture ended the course of his troublesome reign.”—The very act in which he expired, seems to indicate filial piety and affection. Even Henry Etienne, a violent declaimer against Catherine of Medicis, and who accuses her of many murders, makes no mention of, nor imputes to her that of Charles.

Mon sieur de Thou hesitates, and leaves it undecided; yet I must own he rather seems to hint poison

who survived him about four years. His widow, Elizabeth of Austria, retired soon after

as the cause of the king's death, and charges indirectly the queen his mother. He adds, that on the opening of his body spots were found in many parts; "Ex  
" *causa incognita, reperti livores.*"—Brantome denies this assertion. He positively declares, that no marks of violence were discoverable on the king's body.—  
" Le jour ensuivant son corps fut ouvert en presence  
" du magistrat, et n'y ayant été trouvé au dedans au-  
" cune meurtrisseure ny tache, cela osta publique-  
" ment l'opinion que l'on avoit de la poison." He adds, that Monsieur de Strozzi and himself demanded of Ambrose Paré, the king's surgeon, to what cause he imputed his death? who replied, that " he had  
" destroyed his lungs and vitals, by constantly and  
" immoderately blowing the horn." A moment after, however, he talks of poison.—" Si est ce qu'on  
" ne scauroit offer aucuns d'opinion qu'il ne fut em-  
" poissonné, des que son frere partit pour Pologne, et  
" disoit on que c'étoit de la poudre de corne d'un  
" lievre marin, qui fait languir long tems la personne,  
" et puis après peu à peu s'en va, et s'eteint comme une  
" chandelle. Ceux qu'on en a soupçonné autheurs,  
" n'ont pas fait meilleure fin." These are Brantome's words.

The Marechal de Bassompierre says, that having one day told Louis the thirteenth, that Charles the ninth had broke a vein in his lungs by blowing the horn,  
which

after into her father the emperor Maximilian's dominions, and died in retreat, at Prague.—By his mistress, Mary Touchet, he had one son, Charles, grand Prior of France, Duke of Angoulesme, and Count de Ponthieu; well known by his treasonable connections with the duke of Bir6n, under Henry the fourth's reign.

There is perhaps no character in history, upon which we should decide with so much candour and benignity, as on that of Charles the ninth.—Educated in a corrupt and vicious court, under Catherine of Medicis's pernicious counsels, all the noble seeds of virtue and kingly greatness, with

which caused his death; the king replied, that he would not have died so soon, if he had not drawn on himself his mother Catherine's resentment, and been so imprudent as to trust himself near her, at the Marechal de Retz's persuasion.—Catherine was so conscious that her son's death was imputed to her by the people, that she thought it necessary to inform the governors of the provinces of all the circumstances of his disorder, with intent to vindicate herself from the suspicions universally received and cherished against her.

which

which nature had liberally endow'd him, were extinguished, or perverted into destructive and furious passions. In genius, in discernment and capacity, he was not inferior to Francis the first. He possessed a comprehensive and retentive memory, an energy of expression and force of eloquence the most happy, an incredible activity personal and intellectual. Of deep and keen penetration, he knew the human heart, and piqued himself on his skill in pervading its feelings, through the closest disguise.

No prince of the house of Valois excelled him in intrepidity and courage. His munificence was truly royal, because universal, unlimited, and impartial; not confined to favourites and parasites, like Henry the third, his brother's. With intent to prevent him from application to affairs of state, those about his person endeavoured to throw him into debauches of wine and women. To the latter he was little addicted; and having once perceived that intoxication had so far

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disturbed



disturbed his reason, as to induce him to commit some actions of violence and indecorum, he never could be persuaded to engage a second time in drunken festivity, and carefully abstained from any excess during the remainder of his life. “*Princeps præclara indole, et magnis virtutibus,*” says Monsieur de Thou, “*nisi quatenus eas prava educatione et matris indulgentia corruptit.*”

Amid all the horrors with which the sad annals of his reign abound; in the midst of massacres and commotions, he yet cultivated with assiduity the humanizing arts and politer studies of a liberal mind. He took a peculiar pleasure in the company of learned and ingenious men, in a select company of whom he often unbent himself, and held a sort of academy. He possessed an easy vein of poetry, and some of his compositions in verse yet remain, which do honour to his genius.—With talents so comprehensive and various, he would doubtless under other tuition, have been ranked amongst the greatest

monarchs whom France has seen reign. His vices and crimes are evidently the result of misguided youth, and passions naturally impetuous. Over the massacre of Paris, a mind tinctured with compassion for human error and weakness, will draw a veil. To his mother, and to his evil counsellors, that deed of sanguinary and abominable revenge is to be justly attributed \*.

In his person he was tall, and finely shaped. He stooped in his walk, and his head usually leaned on one side a little.

\* Brantome, who freely and fully enumerates Charles's vices, and speaks in terms of detestation of the massacre of Paris, yet exculpates him on account of his unripe youth, his unprincipled preceptors, and the general corruption of the whole court. I much admire the passage. It breathes a generosity and candour of sentiment. " J'ai vu plusieurs s'étonner," says Brantome, " que veu la corruption de son regne, " et depuis la perte qu'il fit de monsieur de Sipierre, " qui le nourrissoit si bien, comme il fut si magnanime, si genereux, vertueux, valeureux, et liberal, " comme il a été. Car il a autant étendu sa libéralité que fit jamais roi, à toutes sortes de gens."

His

His complexion was pale, his hair of a deep black, his nose aquiline, and his regard keen and penetrating. His neck was long and slender, his chest raised, and all his limbs justly proportioned, except his legs which were rather too big. He excelled in every martial or corporal exercise, and rode the horse with distinguished grace and address. Of hunting he was immoderately fond, and pursued it to the injury of his health and constitution. The Marechal de Retz, and those who presided over his education, had so accustomed him to the habit of swearing, that he mingled oaths and imprecations in his common discourse.

Cut off by an immature and miserable death, just as he began to emerge from the horrid abyss of guilt and infamy, into which a deference to his mother's advice had plunged him; and scarce known but as the perpetrator of St. Bartholomew's fatal carnage; posterity have surveyed the picture of his reign with detestation rather

than pity, and condemned him too severely for errors not his own.—I do not mean to become his apologist or panegyrist. The true character of Charles the ninth is too well known to all Europe, at this distance of time, to admit the possibility of throwing many new lights on it, or altering materially the suffrage of mankind. Commiseration for a prince, evidently the victim of a pernicious system of politics, and cover'd with the odium of imputed enormities ;—the satisfaction we feel in attempting to snatch from ignominy a character not originally debased ;—the impartiality which every writer should cultivate and encourage ;—these sentiments alone have induced me to depicture Charles the ninth, in a different light from that in which he has generally been represented, by all the English historians.

The same indecent neglect which had been shewn to the funerals of Francis the second, characterised those of Charles ; and, some disputes relative to precedence arising



arising among the nobility who attended the proceſſion, his body was quitted between Paris and St. Denis, and conducted, without pomp or any regal ſtate, to the tomb of his anceſtors \*.

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The reign of Henry the third yet remains, to conclude the ſeries of princes, whoſe lives, when I began theſe Memoirs, I intended to have written. As laſt of the family of Valois, his death, by which the

\* Brantome was himſelf, as a gentleman of the bed-chamber, one of the very few who accompanied his royal maſter's body, and ſaw it deposited at St. Denis.—  
 “Le corps du Roi fut quitté,” ſays he, “eſtant à  
 “l’église de St. Lazare, de tout le grand convoy,  
 “tant des princes, ſeigneurs, cour de parlement, et  
 “ceux de l’église et de la ville; et ne fut ſuivy et  
 “accompagné que du pauvre Monsieur de Arozze, de  
 “Funeel, et moi, et de deux autres gentilhommes de  
 “la chambre, qui ne voulusmes jamais abandonner  
 “notre maître, tant qu’il ſeroit ſur terre. Il y avoit  
 “auſſi quelques archers de la garde. Choeſe, qui  
 “ faiſoit grand pitié à voir!”—A dreadful fatality ſeems to have accompanied this unhappy prince; and the continual diſſentions which marked his reign, attended him even after death.

crown descended to the house of Bourbon, forms a great and signal epocha in the annals of France. It even seems wanting to complete the piece, and constituted originally a part of my plan. But that languor and lassitude of mind, which we naturally experience after any continued application or exertion of our faculties to one object, must be my apology. If these Memoirs, the production of leisure and a fondness for historical knowledge, shall conduce to entertain or amuse, I may resume the subject in some future time.

Though my sole design has been to excite attention, by a lively delineation rather of men and manners, than kings and political events; yet, in no character or narration have I willingly or knowingly sacrificed truth to imagination, or added fictitious colours to those of nature and reality. I have even endeavoured carefully to repress any luxuriance, unbecoming or inconsistent with the sacred veracity due to historical facts; nor have

wished to affix more odium to the name of Louis the eleventh, or confer more eulogium on Francis the first, than I apprehend them dispassionately to have merited.

END OF THE MEMOIRS.

wished to ally more closely to the house  
of Louis the eleventh; or confer more  
elegantly on France, the gift, than I ap-  
prehend, them diplomatically to have  
assisted.

END OF THE MEMOIRS.



A

T O U R

THROUGH THE

WESTERN, SOUTHERN, AND INTERIOR

PROVINCES OF FRANCE.

T O U R

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T O U R

THROUGH THE

WESTERN, SOUTHERN, AND INTERIOR

PROVINCES OF FRANCE.

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T O U R, &c.

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Carenten in Low Normandy,  
Saturday, 26th August, 1775.

**Y**OU shall be obeyed, my dear Sir;  
and I prepare myself with pleasure, to give you the same minute narration of the events which diversify my present tour, as I did in my last round the Baltic.

I landed in this kingdom, at Cherbourg, last Wednesday evening. The ruins of the pier which was demolished by our troops in the late war, present a mournful picture of devastation, as they still remain exactly in the state they were left on the re-embarkation of the English in 1758. The town itself impresses with no higher ideas of opulence or commerce.

It

It is a wretched collection of houses crouded together in a sandy valley close to the shore; dirty, irregular, and mean. The situation, in the center of the channel, and between the two Capes of Barfleur and La Hogue, has alone made it always important in the eye of policy.

If Havre de Grace has been ever esteemed the key of High Normandy, Cherbourg is equally so of the Lower. During the many reigns in which it was subject to the English government, our princes appear to have been sensible of its full value. They often landed there, when called over by revolts of their barons or subjects; and we find the Norman princes, who frequently resided at Winchester, usually embarking for this port, in preference to any other. A very strong garrison was generally maintained in it; and Charles the seventh terminated his long train of victories over the timid and divided counsels of our Henry the sixth, by this important conquest. It was re-annexed to the crown of France in 1450.—I am surprized to find  
that



that the ministry have never fortified this city. Charles the Bad, king of Navarre, into whose hands it was sequestered in the fifteenth century, surrounded it with walls in the gothic style of defence, which remained till Louis the fourteenth's reign, who dismantled it, in the intention of erecting new ones; but the Marquis de Barbesieux, who was then his minister, found other more pressing calls for the public money, in the wars which opened the present century, and shook his master's throne.

About half a mile from the town is a cliff or rock of prodigious height. I ascended it by a long winding path, across the adjoining mountain. On the top I found a little convent of Benedictine monks, or hermits—for so they term themselves—who have chosen to quit the vale below, and retired to the bleak summit, cultivate a few acres of ground sterile and stony, from which they procure with difficulty a miserable subsistence. One of them, the Superior, after having  
shewn

shewn me the little chapel and refectoire, led me to the extreme point of the cliff, on which stands a crucifix. "This," said he, "is the spot, from whence John King of England is said to have thrown his nephew, prince Arthur of Bretagne. Tradition reports, that he perpetrated it with his own hand, in a tempestuous night; and that the sea, which, though now expelled, then washed the foot of the rock, received the body of the unhappy prince." — You remember, no doubt, perfectly this part of the English history. It is, however, a very disputable circumstance, and there is scarce any illustrious death more concealed from the public knowledge, than that in question. It is certain that prince Arthur, after having been conducted through several provinces, with ignominy, by his uncle, finally disappeared in 1203.—But so far are historians from positively ascertaining the time or manner of his exit, that they disagree in the place of his confinement, previous to that event; and whether he

was

was imprisoned in the castle of Rouen, Falaise, or in that of Cherbourg—for these three are all named—we are not able precisely to determine.

There is another vestige of our English monarchs yet in being, which stands on incontestable authority, and can plead more than mere tradition. To the westward of the town, about a mile distant, a little rivulet empties itself into the sea. It is called the “Chantereine.” In a meadow, a few paces from the shore, stands a small chapel, which was built by Matilda, daughter of Henry the first, and mother of Henry the second. History relates, that in the reign of Stephen, who usurped the throne, she passed over from Wareham into Normandy, to raise fresh forces in support of her claim. Being attacked by a violent tempest at sea, she had recourse to the same means which Philip the second used at St. Quintin, and Clement the seventh at the sack of Rome, to avert the danger—I mean prayers. It does not appear that she implored the Deity,

or even Jesus Christ; but, reposing her whole hope in the immaculate Virgin, she made a vow, that if she ever set her foot again on land, she would sing a hymn to the Virgin on the spot where she alighted. Her vows were accepted; the storm abated, and she arrived happily. The instant she got on shore, one of the sailors reminded her of her promise, in these words, “Chante, reine, vechi terrel” and as it was exactly at the mouth of this rivulet, the exclamation gave rise to the name it bears to this day. Not content with so simple a mark of her gratitude, she erected the chapel, of which I spoke, which is called “Notre Dame du vœu.” I went into it. The story is recorded at length. The architecture bears every mark of extreme rudeness and barbarism, such as characterised the age in which it was built. Six centuries, which have elapsed since its construction, have loosened the stones which compose it, and begin to threaten its demolition. As I went out, I remarked an iron box, apparently coeval with the chapel;



chapel ; and over it, on the wall, in characters almost erased, was a little inscription, signifying, that it was intended for charitable donations towards repairing “ Our Lady du Vœu.”—How could I withstand so forcible a request from a sovereign ? I let fall a bit of money into the box, and went away.

Cherbourg pretends to very high antiquity. It is said to have been originally called Cæsarbourg. Richard the second, duke of Normandy, and uncle to William the Conqueror, erected a strong castle here, and having come in person to view it, was so pleased with the apparent importance of the place for the conservation of his duchy, that he exclaimed in a rapture, “ *Ly castel est un cher bourg per mi !*” This trifling circumstance was the origin of its present name. Coins of several Roman emperors have been dug up here at different times ; and a gentleman shewed me one, in fine preservation, of Antoninus Pius, found only a few years since. Other traditions confirm this

fact; and the beautiful “Val-de-Saire,” which lies in the eastern part of the Coutentin, near Cape Barfleur, is said to be a corruption of “Val-de-Ceres,” which it was called by the Romans, in honour of that goddess, from its extraordinary fertility.

I left Cherbourg yesterday morning, and after dining at Valognes, a considerable town, arrived here last night. I would have proceeded for Coutances this morning, but Madame Clotilde’s marriage with the prince de Piedmont has left the provinces without horses, as they are ordered to Paris, to convey the princess and her suite to Turin. I am therefore under the necessity of staying till to-morrow; and, for want of other amusement, I have wandered over this place, and its environs.

The town is small, but the ruins of the castle are very beautiful. It is celebrated in the civil wars under Charles the ninth, and in those of the League, which followed, in the reigns of Henry the

the third and fourth. The architecture of the great church is elegant, it having been erected in the fifteenth century, when the Gothic structures had almost attained to their highest point of beauty and perfection. There was nothing in the inside which merited attention, except an altar, and a painting dedicated to St. Cæcilia. The sweet saint appears playing on a sort of harpsichord, her fingers sinking negligently into the keys. A blue mantle loosely buckled over her shoulder exposes part of her neck to view, and her fair hair floats down her back. The pupils of her eyes are thrown up to heaven in a fine frenzy of musical enthusiasm.—If there were many such canonized beauties in the Romish calendar, it would be a dangerous religion. The heart erects altars to them without the aid of piety.

I shall continue my remarks as I proceed.

Coutances, Monday, 28th August, 1775.

**I**T is only six leagues from Carenten to this city; but the road, even at this season of the year, is so bad, that those of Westphalia and Brandenburg are fine in comparison. The roads of Low Normandy are infamous to a proverb; and I should never have had the boldness to venture through them, if I had been previously acquainted with their nature. Coutances has, however, in some degree, made amends for the difficulties I found in arriving at it, and repaid me by the objects it affords of entertainment. It was founded by the Romans, who established a legion here, and called it "Castra Constantia." They fortified it with very strong walls, which existed till Louis the eleventh's reign; who demolished them, because the place, being part of the domain of his brother Charles, refused to admit a royal garrison. It stands on a hill, the sides of which descend with prodigious



aligious rapidity. Beyond the vale, a range of hills rises like a superb amphitheatre, and invests it on every side. The houses bear all the marks of antiquity in their structure and taste, which is rude to a great degree. Many of them have doubtless stood five or six hundred years; and on one, the style of which merits peculiar study, is the date 1007 yet remaining in very legible characters.

On the summit of the hill, in the center of the town, stands the cathedral. I have spent several hours in the examination of its architecture. There is a grotesque beauty spread over the whole; and the fantastic ornaments of Gothic building are mingled with a wondrous delicacy and elegance in many of its parts. It was begun in 1047; and William the Conqueror, king of England, assisted in person at its solemn consecration some years after. I went up to the top of the great center tower, to enjoy one of the finest prospects imaginable. The town of Granville appears in front, and beyond it the islands

of Chaufey. Jerfey, at the diftance of feven leagues to the north, forms a noble object. The country on all fides, towards St. Lo, Avranches, and Carenten, is a garden, rich, cultivated, and fhaded with woods. They fay that a certain barbarous monk, named St. Ereptiole, founded this fee as early as the year 430, in the emperor Theodofius the fecond's reign, and under the papacy of Celeftine the firft.—Henry the fifth took the city in the year 1418, after a fhort fieve; but it returned to the crown of France under the declining power of the houfe of Lancafter.

Coutances is large, but the convents form a confiderable part of its fize, and the religious of different orders, a great part of its inhabitants. As it is two leagues diftant from the fea, and has not any navigable river, there is no commerce; but fome few provincial nobleffe refide in it.

I am charmed with the Coutentin: all this part of Low Normandy is fo called. From Cherbourg to Valognes, it was  
6 mountainous

mountainous and heathy; but in general the country is inferior to no part of the north of Europe. Fine acclivities cloathed with wood, and rich vallies covered with harvests, form a most pleasing scene. There is notwithstanding an apparent penury and nastiness in the dwellings of the people. The hand of oppression is visible in their habit, their hovels, their appearance. I saw none of those neat and pretty peasants so common in our most secluded villages.

The Coutentin has given birth to some illustrious men. Those brave and romantic heroes so famous in ancient story, Tancred, and Robert Guiscard—who, after having expelled the Saracens from Apulia and Calabria, founded the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, which they transmitted to their descendants—were Counts of Hauteville, a little town not far from Valognes. History informs us, that Robert duke of Normandy, and son to the Conqueror, the most generous and the most necessitous prince of

his age, mortgaged this part of his dominions to his brother Rufus, previous to his voyage to the Holy Land. The sum, if I remember right, which he received, was only ten thousand marks, which the rapacious Rufus levied on his English subjects.

You see I call in history or tradition to my assistance every moment. Indeed it is impossible to travel through this duchy, where our ancient monarchs held their so frequent residence, without being reminded continually of some of those anecdotes transmitted to us respecting them. Adieu !

In the evening I proceed to Granville.



Granville, Wednesday, 30th August, 1775.

**T**HERE is perhaps no pleasure greater, than that of communicating pleasure received; and, as admiration is one of the most elegant and interesting sources from which it can be drawn, we usually listen with extreme readiness to any addresses made to that passion. I wish to prepare you for a recital, in which the marvellous and the astonishing may predominate; though you may do me the justice to believe, they will ever be under the guidance of truth.

Superstition, the parent of a thousand evils to mankind, has yet given rise to such extraordinary and magnificent productions in every age, as almost incline one to pardon her crimes and follies. I am just returned from the survey of one of the first of these; and shall endeavour to address my imperfect description of it to your heart and affections.

I left Coutances Monday evening. The distance

distance to this town is only fix leagues, through a continuation of the same agreeable country which I have already painted to you. Desirous to visit the celebrated "Mont St. Michel," I hired two horses, and set out early yesterday morning. It is about twenty miles from Granville, and the road lying along the sea-shore, renders it very pleasant. I got to Genet, a little village, before noon. From hence it is only a league to the Mount; but as it lies entirely across the sands, which are only passable at low tide, it becomes indispensably requisite to procure a guide. I did so, and arrived there at one in the afternoon.

This extraordinary rock—for it is no more—rises in the middle of the bay of Avranches. Nature has completely fortified one side, by its craggy and almost perpendicular descent, which renders it impracticable for courage or address, however consummate, to scale or mount it. The other parts are surrounded by walls fenced with semilunar towers in the Gothic manner; but

but sufficiently strong, superadded to the advantages of its situation, to despise all attack. At the foot of the mountain, begins a street or town, which winds round its base to a considerable height. Above, are chambers where prisoners of state are kept, and other buildings intended for residence; and on the summit is erected the abbey itself, occupying a prodigious space of ground, and of a strength and solidity equal to its enormous size; since it has stood all the storms of Heaven, in this elevated and exposed situation, during many centuries. —I spent the whole afternoon in the different parts of this edifice; and as the Swiss who conducted me through them, found he could not gratify my curiosity too minutely, he left no apartment or chamber unseen.

The “Sale de Chevalerie,” or knights’ hall, reminded me of that at Marienbourg in Polish Prussia. It is equally spacious; but more barbarous and rude, because some hundred years prior in its erection.

Here

Here the knights of St. Michael used to meet in solemn convocation on important occasions. They were the defenders and guardians of this mountain and abbey, as those of the temple, and of St. John of Jerusalem, were to the holy sepulchre.—At one end is a painting of the archangel, the patron of their order; and in this hall Louis the eleventh first instituted, and invested with the insignia of knighthood, the chevaliers of the cross of St. Michael.

We passed on through several lesser rooms into a long passage, on one side of which the Swiss opened a door, and through a narrow entrance, perfectly dark, he led me, by a second door, into an apartment, or dungeon—for it rather merited the latter than the former appellation—in the middle of which stood a cage. It was composed of prodigious wooden bars; and the wicket which admitted into it was ten or twelve inches in thickness. I went into the inside: the space it comprised was about twelve feet square,



square, or fourteen ; and it might be nearly twenty in height. This was the abode of many eminent victims in former ages, whose names and miseries are now obliterated and forgotten.

“ There was,” said my conductor, “ towards the latter end of the last century, a certain news-writer in Holland, who had presumed to print some very severe and sarcastic reflections on Madame de Maintenon, and Louis the fourteenth. Some months after he was induced, by a person sent expressly for that purpose, to make a tour into French Flanders. The instant he had quitted the Dutch territories, he was put under arrest, and immediately, by his majesty’s express command, conducted to this place. They shut him up in this cage. Here he lived upwards of three-and-twenty years ; and here he, at length, expired. — During the long nights of winter,” continued the man, “ no candle or fire was allowed him. He was not permitted to have  
“ any

“ any book. He saw no human face ex-  
“ cept the gaoler, who came once every  
“ day to present him, through a hole in  
“ the wicket, his little portion of bread  
“ and wine. No instrument was given  
“ him, with which he could destroy him-  
“ self; but he found means at length to  
“ draw out a nail from the wood, with  
“ which he cut or engraved, on the bars  
“ of his cage, certain fleurs de lis, and  
“ armorial bearings, which formed his  
“ only employment and recreation.” —  
These I saw, and they are indeed very cu-  
riously performed, with so rude a tool.

As I stood within this dreadful en-  
gine, my heart sunk within me. I  
execrated the vengeance of the prince,  
who, for such a trespass, could inflict so  
disproportionate and tremendous a pu-  
nishment. I thought the towers and pin-  
nacles of the abbey seemed to shake, as  
conscious of the cruelty committed in  
their gloomy round; and I hastened out  
of this sad apartment, impressed with feel-  
ings of the deepest pity and indignation.

“ It

“ It is now fifteen years,” said the Swiss,  
 “ since a gentleman terminated his days  
 “ in that cage ; it was before I came to  
 “ reside here : but there is one instance  
 “ within my own memory. Monsieur de  
 “ F——, a person of rank, was con-  
 “ ducted here by command of the late  
 “ king ; he remained three years shut up  
 “ in it. I fed him myself every day ; but  
 “ he was allowed books and candle to di-  
 “ vert his misery ; and at length, the  
 “ abbot, touched with his deplorable ca-  
 “ lamities, requested and obtained the  
 “ royal pardon. He was set free, and is  
 “ now alive in France.

“ The subterranean chambers,” added  
 he, “ in this mountain, are so numerous,  
 “ that we know them not ourselves.  
 “ There are certain dungeons, called  
 “ Oubliettes,” into which they were ac-  
 “ customed anciently to let down malefac-  
 “ tors guilty of very heinous crimes : they  
 “ provided them with a loaf of bread and  
 “ a bottle of wine ; and then they were  
 “ totally forgotten, and left to perish by  
 “ hunger

“hunger in the dark vaults of the rock.  
 “This punishment has not however been  
 “inflicted by any king in the last or  
 “present century.”

We continued our progress through the  
 abbey. He led me into a chamber, in one  
 corner of which was a kind of window;  
 between this and the wall of the building  
 was a very deep space or hollow of near a  
 hundred feet perpendicular, and at bottom,  
 was another window, opening to the sea.  
 It is called “The hole of Montgomeri.”  
 The history of it is this.—You will re-  
 collect, that in the year 1559, Henry the  
 second, king of France, was unfortunately  
 killed at a tournament by the Count de  
 Montgomeri. It was not intended on  
 that nobleman's part; and he was forced,  
 contrary to his inclination, to push the  
 lance against his sovereign, by his express  
 command. He was a Hugonot, and, hav-  
 ing escaped the massacre of Paris and Co-  
 ligni, made head against the royal forces  
 in Normandy, supported by our Elizabeth  
 with arms and money. Being driven from  
 his



his fortresses in those parts, he retired to a rock, called the “ Tombelaine.” This is another, similar to the “ Mont St. Michel,” only three quarters of a league distant from it, and of nearly equal dimensions. At that time there was a castle on it, afterwards demolished, and of which scarce any vestiges now remain. From this fastness, only accessible at low tides, he continually made excursions, and annoyed the enemy, who never dared to attack him. He coined money, laid all the adjacent country under contribution, and rendered himself universally dreaded. Desirous however to surprize the “ Mont St. Michel,” he found means to engage one of the monks resident in the abbey, who promised to give him the signal for his enterprize, by displaying a handkerchief. The treacherous monk having made the signal, betrayed him, and armed all his associates, who waited Montgomeri’s arrival. The chieftain came attended by fifty chosen soldiers, desperate, and capable of any attempt.

tempt. They crossed the sand, and having placed their scaling-ladders, mounted one by one; as they came to the top, they were dispatched each in turn, without noise. Montgomeri, who followed last, at length discovered the perfidy, and escaped with only two of his men, with whom he regained the "Tombelaine." They preserve with great care the ladders and grappling irons used on this occasion.—You perhaps remember the subsequent fate of the Count himself. He was at last besieged and taken prisoner by the Marechal de Matignon, in 1574, at Domfront in Normandy; and Catherine of Medicis, who detested him for his having been, though innocently, the cause of her husband's death, ordered him to be immediately executed.

The church itself detained me a long time, and is matter of high curiosity. It rests on nine pillars of most enormous dimensions, which stand upon the solid rock. I did not measure them; but, as far as the gloominess of the place would admit,

admit, I apprehend that each of them must be five-and-twenty feet in circumference: besides these, there are two others, of much inferior size, which support the center of the church, over which is the tower. If the prodigious incumbent weight be considered, and the nature of its situation, nothing less massy could sustain the edifice. They seem as if designed to outlive the ravages of time, and the convulsions of nature. — But before we enter the church itself, I must inform you of the absurd and legendary cause, which first produced it.

In the reign of Childebert the second, there was a bishop of Avranches named St. Aubert. To this holy man, the archangel Michael was pleased to appear one night, and order him to go to this rock, and there build him a church. St. Aubert, who seems to have been a little incredulous, treated it as a dream: the angel came again, repeated his injunction, and not being obeyed, the third time, he, by way of imprinting it on the bishop's

P 2

memory,

memory, made a hole in his skull, by touching it with his thumb. In the treasury of the church I saw this curious skull. It is enclosed in a little shrine of gold, and a chrystal, which opens over the orifice, admits the gratification of curiosity by the minutest examination of it. The hole is of a size and shape justly proportioned to the thumb supposed to have produced it, and whether done with a knife, or by what means it is perforated, I cannot determine. The bishop however, upon this sensible mark of the divine pleasure, delayed no longer; but repaired to the rock, and constructed a small church, as he had been commanded.—Here fable ends; and true history, supplying its place, informs us, that it was in 966, when Richard the second duke of Normandy began to build the abbey. It was completed about the year 1070, under William the Conqueror, though many other additions were made by succeeding abbots.

The treasury is crowded with relics innumerable,



numerable, among which some few have a real and intrinsic value. There is a fine head of Charles the sixth of France cut in chrystal, which drew my attention. They have got, heaven knows by what means, an arm of Edward the Confessor's; and they shewed me another, of "St. Richard, king of England." Who this saint and prince was, I confess, is beyond my comprehension. I am sure they could not term Richard the first so, unless his crusade against Saladine wiped out all his sins, and canonized him. Richard the second has no better pretensions to sanctity. I do not mention him who fell at Bosworth: so that who this royal saint was, I must leave you to divine. As to the monks, they know nothing about it; but they were positive he was a king of England.—An enormous golden cockleshell, weighing many pounds, given by Richard the second duke of Normandy, when he founded the abbey, is worthy remark.

In the middle of the choir hangs a stone,

which is said to have fallen on the head of Louis the eleventh at the siege of Be-fançon, without doing him the smallest injury. This, he conceived, and with reason, must have been owing to some wondrous divine interposition; for the stone weighs, I should suppose, at least ten pounds. Louis, though the greatest monster who ever filled a throne, was yet, at times, exceedingly pious: he used to come very often in pilgrimage to “Mont St. Michel;” and he ordered this stone to be suspended by a chain in the choir, and left an annual sum in lands to maintain priests to say masses, for his preservation from so imminent a danger.

The refectory, the cloisters, the cells of the monks, are all, (or rather they have been) very magnificent, and spacious; but a vast sum of money is wanted to put the whole in repair, and reinstate what the lapse of ages defaces and deforms. One of the great towers is cracked and shaken. They have written repeatedly to the ministry, to know his majesty's pleasure:

sure respecting it; but no answer has been returned. It will probably tumble soon, and must necessarily, from its prodigious height and size, draw with it a considerable part of the adjoining edifices.

The late king sequestered the revenues of the abbey, which are very ample. A prior is substituted instead of the abbot, and the number of religious reduced from thirty to fourteen. Perhaps a few years more may even extinguish these; and St. Michael himself, though composed of gold, be melted down to support the expence of a *bal paré*.—It is at present considered rather as a prison of state, and will more probably be repaired on that account, than as an erection of piety. The apartments are, at this time, occupied by many illustrious captives, who have been sent here by “*Lettre de cachet*,” for crimes of state. They are detained in stricter or easier confinement, according to the royal mandate. There are in one range of rooms eight, who eat

at a round table together. They are allowed each a pint of wine; but neither knives or forks are ever given them, lest they should commit suicide, to escape the horrors of captivity. No person is permitted to enter that division where they live, or can hold any conversation with them. Four of these are sent here since the accession of his present majesty. There are others who have the liberty of going into every part of the Mount without restraint; but to profit of this permission they must be habited as priests, and of consequence, universally known. To escape, one should suppose impossible—but what cannot human subtlety effect, when pushed to despair? It is only sixteen days since a Monsieur de C——, who had been confined ten months, succeeded in an attempt to set himself free. I was shewn the place from whence he let himself down by a rope: it is near a hundred feet perpendicular. He crossed the sands immediately, while the sea was low; and it is imagined he has embarked for Jersey or England,



England, as no intelligence has been received concerning him.

Some apartments are destined to a species of wretches yet more deplorable—I mean, to lunatics. There are several of high rank. In the cloisters of the abbey, a person accosted me in very polite terms. He was apparently above fifty years of age; his habit was squalid; at his button-hole hung a cross of St. Michael, fantastically adorned with ribbons. His face, though brown and sickly, had a Somewhat noble, commanding, and engaging; his hair of a deep black, mixed with grey, hung floating upon his shoulders; and over his whole person was an air of dignity in ruin. It was the Marquis de R—, a Breton nobleman, who has been shut up here five-and-twenty years. He is insane, but harmless, and perfectly observant of all the forms in cultivated life.—None but persons of quality are ever sent here on this account.

I thought the age of pilgrimages had been at an end in all European nations,

and that devotion contented itself with venerating its saints at home—but will you believe it, when I assure you, the number of pilgrims, who come annually to pay their vows to St. Michael at this Mount, are between eight and ten thousand? They are mostly peasants, and men of mean occupations; but even among the noblesse there are not wanting those, who are induced to make this journey from principles of piety. The little town is sometimes so crowded with them, that not a bed is to be procured. I saw at least six when I was there. They were young men and women. Their habit exactly corresponded with our ideas of them, as drawn from ancient ballads. Their hats were covered with cockle-shells, laced round the edges; and on the crown was a gilt coronet, above which was the cross. A ribbon in the same form was tied across their breast; and all over their cloaths were placed little images of St. Michael vanquishing the devil. I asked them from whence they came? they said, from Champagne;

pagne ; a very considerable distance, across all France. I put several questions to them ; and they would willingly have followed me when I went up to the top of the steeple ; but the Swiss, who was well accustomed to see these poor devotees arrive, repulsed them very roughly for their temerity. “*Que diable !*” says he, “*allez, allez ! Je ne conduis pas le menu peuple !*” The poor pilgrims retired immediately, without a word.—It is said, the late dauphin was here incog, about nineteen or twenty years ago ; and the old man who conducted me across the sands, assured me he had the honour to be his highness’s guide, without knowing at the time his rank. His character was that of a bigot, and I am not at all surprized at such a proof of it.—At the foot of the mountain, close to the waves, is a very fine well of fresh water ; but as this might and would be undoubtedly possess’d by an enemy in case of a siege, they have contrived to hollow into the so-

lid rock, cisterns proportionate to every other part of the building, and capable of containing many hundred tuns of water; they say more than twelve hundred. Indeed, to besiege it would be madness: a hundred men might defend it against ten thousand assailants, and any number of vessels; nor could it be, if taken, converted to any sort of use.

The town itself is almost as curious as any other part of the Mount. I doubt not there are many houses in it five or six hundred years old; and I did not see one which seemed to be built since Louis the eleventh's time. The whole number of persons resident in the abbey, and in the town, does not exceed a hundred and eighty, in time of peace. A militia, composed of the Bourgeoisie, mount guard, to prevent any of the prisoners from escaping. In time of war there are five hundred soldiers commonly in garrison; and they assured me, so vast and numerous are the chambers in different parts, that thirteen thousand



thousand might be disposed of without any sort of inconvenience.

They sell little legendary books in the town : I have bought them all, in hopes to find some historical anecdotes or traditions respecting the place, and the various important events or sieges it has undergone ;—but alas ! this is a vain attempt. They are all stuffed with miracles, and absurdities too ridiculous to repeat ; and St. Michael and St. Aubert are the only heroes who make any figure in the annals of monkery.—I would most willingly have inspected the archives which are laid up in the abbey ; but this is not permitted. It must be a very curious research, since it is probable every king of England, from the Conqueror to Henry the third, had been many times here from motives of devotion or curiosity.

In the year 1090, Robert duke of Normandy, and William Rufus, besieged their brother Henry a long time in the “ Mont St. Michel.” It must be presumed they were masters of the foot of the rock ;  
for

for otherwise it would be impracticable to invest it. The prince could never have been reduced to surrender from force; but he wanted water, and from this necessity he was on the point of yielding the fortress, when Robert, with that benevolence and generosity which marked his character, sent him some pipes of wine; and this succour, (like that which Henry the fourth permitted his troops to give the Parisians,) enabled Henry to hold out. Rufus reproached him for his conduct; "What," said Robert; "shall we suffer our brother to die of thirst?"—And what return did he meet with? An imprisonment of twenty-eight years in a vaulted chamber of Cardiff castle, where he expired.

I fear to have tired you with so diffuse a description of this mountain. I set out this morning, and, conducted by the same guide across the sands, reached the village of Genet at ten. Numbers of people are drowned every year in passing this place. The sea comes in with a fury and rapidity  
beyond

beyond idea, and frequently arrests unhappy travellers, who presume to venture without a guide. I saw, in the churchyard of Genet, a grave where five persons were interred who perished within these few days, and similar accidents are common.—It was noon when I returned to Granville, my fancy entirely occupied with the extraordinary scenes to which I had been witness, and which I have endeavoured to depicture without study or arrangement.

This town is situated very pleasantly on a neck of land stretching into the sea. It is not small; but the buildings are scattered, mean, and irregular, extending near a mile from one extremity to the other, part on the rock above, and part in the vale below.—It is open to the sea, there being no bay, though they have constructed part of a pier to shelter the shipping. Some small redoubts and batteries have been erected during the late war, on the eminences round the place, to defend

defend it from invasion; but they are of no strength.

It is time to conclude this long letter. My next will be probably from some part of Bretagne. Adieu!

Yours, &c.

St. Malo,



St. Malo, Tuesday, 4th September, 1775.

**I** Arrived here yesterday morning. It was very late Saturday night when I reached Avranches; and had I been a Roman Catholic, I should inevitably have put both myself and my carriage under the protection of the Virgin, or some saint the patron of travellers, before I adventured into these perilous roads. The chaise once stuck fast for near an hour, and I was obliged to employ a dozen peasants, who with the help of pick-axes, and infinite labour, at length heaved it up by main strength.

Avranches detained me a few hours. The city is the nastiest I have yet seen in France; but its situation is very fine. The cathedral stands on a hill, which terminates abrupt: the front extends to the extreme verge, and overhangs the precipice. It bears the marks of high antiquity. The towers are decayed in many places, though its original construction

tion has been wondrously strong. While I stood under it, one of the priests very politely accosted me, and offered, as I appeared to be a stranger, to give me some information respecting it.

“The cathedral,” said he, “has been  
“the work of different ages; but the  
“two western towers are supposed to be  
“as old as the eighth century, the  
“bishopric itself having been founded  
“about the year four hundred. One of  
“the English kings, Henry the second,  
“received absolution here, from the Papal  
“Nuncio, for the murder of St. Thomas-  
“à-Becket, in 1172, and the stone on  
“which he kneeled during the perfor-  
“mance of that solemn ceremony,  
“still exists.” He carried me to look  
at it. The length is about thirty inches,  
and the breadth twelve. It stands be-  
fore the north portal, and on it is in-  
graved a chalice in commemoration of  
the fact.

The ruins of the castle are very exten-  
sive and superb; and beneath lies a rich  
extent

extent of country, covered with orchards, and abounding in grain.

I continued my journey Sunday at noon, and reached the city of Dol in Bretagne the same evening. At Pontorson the two provinces separate, the little river Coesnon forming the boundary. — Dol must detain every man who has a veneration for the vestiges of antiquity. Except the episcopal palace, which is an elegant modern building, there is not a house within the walls, which does not seem to have been erected in ages the most barbarous and remote. The fortifications are in the same style, and appear to have been antiently very formidable. History confirms this. William the Conqueror twice laid siege to Dol, and was twice repulsed. In 1075, Philip king of France forced him to make a hasty retreat into Normandy; and when he again attempted to make himself master of it in 1085, Alain duke of Bretagne obliged him to retire somewhat ignominiously. Henry the second,

more successful, carried it by storm in 1173.

It was a beautiful autumnal evening, and I walked near half a league from the town to view a singular curiosity. In the middle of a very large orchard stands a stone, composed of only one piece, and between forty and fifty feet high. Its circumference near the base equals its height. The form is circular and pyramidal. It is called “La Pierre du champ dolent.”—“The stone of the field of lamentation.” There are no certain accounts when, or on what occasion it was thus erected; but the traditions relative to it are equally numerous and contradictory. I had the pleasure to see and converse with the gentleman on whose estate it is situated. He said, the most approved opinion was, that Julius Cæsar had caused it to be erected as a trophy to mark the extent of his conquests, after a bloody engagement, which he gained over the inhabitants of Armorica. The peasants



peasants are fully persuaded the devil did it in one of his idle hours ; “ but,” added he, “ I have myself caused the earth “ to be removed round its base to the “ distance of forty feet on every side ; “ and I find that it joins to a prodigious “ rock, from which it seems to have “ sprung ; so that I am induced to think, “ notwithstanding its name, that it is a “ natural, and not a factitious produc- “ tion.” However caused, it is very extraordinary, and deserves an attentive investigation.

I got to this city yesterday. The castle was built by the celebrated Anne of Bretagne, who annexed the duchy to the crown of France by her marriage with Charles the eighth. She was asked by the engineer who constructed it, what plan she would choose as its model. “ My “ coach,” said she. It is so in effect. A large square area within constitutes the body : two small towers in the fore-part, answer to the fore-wheels of a carriage, as two others of superior size do, to the

hinder ones ; a projection in front forms the pole, and an arched nich behind, corresponds to the place where the laquais was used to stand. Conscious that posterity would accuse her of caprice and absurdity, she has obviated their criticisms in a manner truly royal, by an inscription engraved in the wall, and very legible at this hour. I read it,

“ Qui que gronde, tel est mon plaisir ! ”

You will allow this is the reasoning of a fovereign.

St. Malo is situated in an island joined to the continent by a causeway. The ancient city and bishopric were half a league distant, on the main-land ; but in the year 1172, John de la Grille removed his residence to the little island of St. Aaron, and began the town which now exists. The houses are all lofty and elegant ; but the streets, owing to the want of ground and the number of inhabitants, are narrow, dirty, and ill pierced.

To-morrow I proceed to Rennes.

Nantes,

Nantes, Saturday, 16th September, 1775.

I Left St. Malo last Thursday seven-night, and lay at Hedé, a little town situate on the summit of a mountain, and commanding a most extensive prospect. I got to Rennes next morning. Here I had flattered myself with the pleasure of seeing the celebrated monsieur de la Chatais, who, after having suffered all the punishments which despotism can inflict, is now returned to spend the little remainder of his days in his native province. I had very particular letters to introduce me to his acquaintance; but he was gone to his seat at Caradeuc, the preceding day. To the honour of his present majesty and the ministry, they have endeavoured to make him every compensation for the cruel indignities he met with under the late reign. The king has presented him with three hundred thousand livres, besides a pension. He is restored to his place of "Procureur general au parlement;" and

his estate of Caradeuc is to be erected into a marquifate.

I ftaid near two days at Rennes. It is the honorary capital of Bretagne, becaufe the ftates are affembled there ; but like all cities deftitute of commerce, is dull and poor. Several of the principal ftreets are however very handsome, as the conflagration in the year 1720, which almoft reduced the whole place to afhes, obliged the inhabitants to rebuild them. In one of the fquares, is a fine ftatue in bronze of Louis the fifteenth. It was erected by the province in 1744, foon after his recovery from that dangerous illnefs in Flanders, when he obtained the title of “ Bien aimé.” Beneath the prince appears on one fide Hegeya the goddess of health, with her ferpent and patera ; and on the other, is the genius of Bretagne, kneeling on one knee, in her countenance exultation and reverence finely marked. At the foot of the pedeftal is an infcription in Latin, dictated by adulation and falfehood. I blufhed as I read it, for the  
monarch



monarch to whom it was offered. He lived, like his predecessor, to see all these marks of public approbation cease; and, lost to greatness or glory in the arms of his mistresses, a dark cloud overshadowed the evening of a reign, which he had opened with some applause.

Rennes is situate on the little river Vilaine. It was anciently fortified very strongly; but the walls are now in ruins, and the fossé nearly filled up. The siege it sustained by Edward the third of England, and John of Gant his son, is celebrated in story. The English and Breton army consisted of forty thousand men; and yet, after having remained before it six months, was obliged to retire without success.

I arrived here on Monday last. This is a handsome city, and its situation is equally advantageous and agreeable. Nantes is built on the easy declivity of a hill, descending on all sides to the river. The Loire itself may almost vie with the Thames. Exactly opposite to the spot on  
which

which stands the town, it is divided into several channels, by a number of small islands, most of which are covered with elegant houses. The great quay is more than a mile in length; the buildings very superb, and chiefly erected since the late peace. As its commerce is every year increasing, the city is consequently in a state of continual improvement and advance in beauty. The Loire is notwithstanding very shallow; and all goods are brought up in large boats from Painbeuf, which is nine leagues distant, near the mouth of the river, and at which vessels of burden are obliged to stop. At the eastern extremity of the town stands the castle, in which the ancient dukes of Bretagne held their residence. It was erected about the year 1000; but the duke of Mercœur, who during the long wars of the League, rendered himself in some degree sovereign of the province, made several considerable additions to it. In the chapel, Anne, duchess of Bretagne, married Louis the twelfth in 1499; and

by this second union, confirmed the duchy to the crown of France. They showed me the chamber in which the Cardinal de Retz was confined, by order of Anne of Austria, and from which he made his escape by letting himself down with a rope into a boat, which waited for him on the Loire.

Many of the dukes of Bretagne are interred in the different churches of the city. The most splendid of all the monuments erected to their memory, is that of Francis the second, in whose person they terminated. It is in the "Eglise des Carmes," and was the offering of filial duty. His daughter Anne caused it to be constructed, while she was queen of France. Michael Columb, a Breton by birth, was the artist; and it must be confessed to be a "chef d'œuvre" in sculpture. The tomb is as magnificent as any of those in St. Denis; and not content with this proof of her piety and attachment to his memory, she ordered her heart to be deposited within a  
golden

golden box, in the same vault.—The inscription near the tomb, is very curious. It relates that Francis the second, after having been married seven years to his first wife without issue, as his last resource, made a vow to the Virgin, that if by her intercession or power, he obtained a child, he would dedicate to her an image of his own weight in gold. The holy Virgin, whether moved by the prodigious value of the present, or whether touched with pity, heard the prayer very favourably. The duke had a son, and performed his vow; though exigencies of state obliged him some years afterwards to retract the princely donation he had made.—By his second wife Margaret de Foix, he had the princess Anne.

Nantes was anciently, like almost every city in Europe, very strongly fortified. Peter de Dreux, one of their dukes, surrounded it with walls, which have only been demolished within these few years. The bridge is an object of curiosity. It is near a mile and a half in length, being  
continued



continued across all the little islands in the Loire, from north to south. There are two other rivers considerably smaller, which unite at this city. One of them is called the Erdre. I went up it, about two leagues yesterday, to a gentleman's Chateau, where I dined. The Meander, so famous in Grecian fable, can hardly exceed it in beauty. It winds between groves of chestnut, oak, and poplar, which cover the banks to the edge of the water, and which are only interrupted by vineyards, gardens, and elegant villas. About half way, are the ruins of a celebrated fortress possessed by the Hugonots, called the castle "de la Verriere," and at the distance of a mile from the house where I spent the day, is an ancient mansion embowered in woods, which belonged to Peter Landais, the famous and unworthy favourite of Francis the second.

Bretagne is by no means so fertile or cultivated a province as Normandy. The interior part is chiefly open and heathy, but the sea-coasts are both more  
 populous,

populous, and richer in the soil. Round this city, and to the southward, in the " Pays de Retz," vines are very numerous, and they make a thin, four wine, known by the name of " Vin Nantois."

—If we compare the present condition of Bretagne, as constituting a part of the kingdom, with its ancient one, as an independent government, there can be no doubt that the change was the most salutary and happy to be conceived. While under the dominion of their native princes, the duchy was a scene of continual war, bloodshed, and devastation. The dukes of Normandy, or kings of France, were ever aiming at its reduction, and the former effected it more than once. The intestine commotions which were raised by the opposite pretensions of John de Montfort and Charles of Blois, in the fourteenth century, left the miserable country unpeopled, desolate, and a prey to the most severe famine. Louis the eleventh paved the way for its re-union to the crown. The lady of Beaujeu, left regent

regent at his death, pursued her father's measures with vigour; and the narrow, parsimonious character and conduct of Henry the seventh, whose avarice prevented him from lending any effectual succour to Francis or his daughter, conspired to complete this important acquisition.—

I do not recollect many immortal or sublime spirits whom they have produced. Bertrand du Guesclin, Constable of France, so renowned in the wars of Edward the third and the Black Prince, was a native of Bretagne; and Abelard, Heloise's unhappy lover, too well known by his amours and his misfortunes, was born at a village called Le Palet, only ten or twelve miles from Nantes, near the borders of Poictou. He lived in the twelfth century, under Conan the third, duke of Bretagne.

The origin of Nantes is very uncertain. It is carried into remote antiquity. The Romans doubtless had a station here. In the year 1580, among the ruins of a tower demolished at that time, was found  
a stone,

a stone, which, by order of the magistrates, was transported, in 1606, to the “Hotel de Ville.” The inscription on it has greatly exercised the attention of antiquaries. It is very legible, and in Roman characters. I transcribed it myself. This is it.

“Numinib: Augustor:

“Deo: Vol: Jano.

“M: Gemel: Secundus. et C. Sedat: Florus.

“Actor: Vicanor. Portent. Tribunal. C. M.

“Locis ex Stipe conlata posuerunt.”

I cannot forbear mentioning to you one other monument equally singular. Near a bridge which crosses the Loire, called “Le Pont de la belle Croix,” is a stone fixed in the wall, with the remains of a decayed inscription. It was erected to mark the spot where Gilles Marechal de Retz was burnt, under the reign of Charles the seventh, and, as I think, about the year 1440. This nobleman was accused of, and condemned to die, for crimes, which were said to be so horrible and enormous, as to preclude mention. They were



were never divulged, but covered up under a veil of darkness and mystery. A very ingenious man, to whom I am indebted for almost all the information I have gained here, assured me that his trial is yet preserved among the archives of the city; but has never been opened, or even inspected into, from the same motives of horror and caution which actuated his judges. I must confess this appears to me very extraordinary.

The environs of Nantes are agreeable; and I should be tempted to make a longer stay here, if the advanced season did not compel me to hasten my journey. — I shall set out in two hours for La Rochelle. Whether I pursue my rout to Bourdeaux, through Saintonge, or make an excursion by Poitiers and Angoulesme, I do not yet know; you shall hear of me as I proceed.

La Rochelle, Wednesday, 20th Sept. 1775.

**I** SLEPT at Aigrefeille last Saturday night, a little village on the confines of Bretagne, and breakfasted next morning at Montague, the first town in Poictou. I continued my journey the whole day through that province, and arrived, as the sun set, at Moreille. The evening was uncommonly beautiful, and I should have proceeded some miles farther, if a very large convent, which stood opposite to the post-house, in one of the finest situations to be conceived, had not seemed to demand my attention. I ordered horses for the ensuing morning, and walked up to look at it. The great gates were open, and admitted me into a spacious court, or lawn, in front of the building. Here I met the Prior: he was a thin, spare figure, apparently past his fiftieth year, if his habit did not tend to deceive the judgment. He accosted me with extreme politeness; and, on my informing him that

I was

I was a traveller, induced by curiosity to visit his convent, he conducted me into the church, and through the apartments. “We are,” said he, “of the Cistercian order, and owe our foundation to Eleanor, queen of England, and wife to Henry the second: but during the unhappy wars of the League, the chief scene of which lay in this part of the kingdom, our archives were all carried away, and the building itself defaced, by the soldiery of Coligni.”——When we had finished our view of it, he insisted on my company to supper. It was served up with great elegance, and followed by a desert from the gardens of the priory, which were very extensive. I staid till near midnight, and left my generous host with the utmost regret.

I got to Marans, Monday morning. This is a miserable town, situate on the river Sevre, which divides Poictou from the “Pays d’Aunis.” At a small distance from the place, on the bank of the river, towards its mouth, tradition yet points

out the spot rendered celebrated by the interview of Louis the eleventh and his brother Charles duke of Guyenne. The artful monarch exhausted all the wiles of his treacherous and crooked policy to gain his brother, in vain; and their interview, like most others between princes, was attended with no beneficial effect.

It is only twenty miles from Marans to La Rochelle, through a rich country, covered with vines. This city, so famous in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the refuge of the Hugonots, and their grand barrier against the royal power—is still a commercial and populous place, though declined from its ancient lustre. The port, though it does not admit vessels of any considerable burthen, is yet finely calculated for trade. It may be divided into three parts: the basin, which is the innermost, is only a quarter of a mile in circumference; and at the entrance rise two very noble Gothic towers, called the “Tour de St. Nicolas,” and the “Tour de la Chaine.” They are now  
in



in a state of decay, but were anciently designed to protect the town and harbour. Without these, is the “Avant Port,” extending more than a league, and bounded by two points of land, to the north and south. Beyond, is the road, where the largest ships usually anchor, protected from the south-west-winds by the islands of Ré, Oleron, and Aix. Before the cession of Canada to the English, and of New Orleans to the crown of Spain, the trade of La Rochelle was very lucrative. It has again revived within these two last years, to the coast of Guinea, and the East Indies.

This place cannot lay claim to any remote antiquity. It was a little collection of houses on the shore, inhabited by fishermen, when William the ninth, last Count of Poictou, rendered himself master of it in 1139. He transmitted it to his only daughter Eleanor, who, after her divorce from Louis the seventh of France, brought all her ample dowry to Henry the second of England.

Louis transgressed every rule of true policy, in suffering so great a princess to carry her possessions into the family of his vassal, already too powerful. The charter of Eleanor, incorporating the town of La Rochelle, yet subsists, in the registers of the city. She granted them many peculiar privileges, which her son Richard the first afterwards confirmed. Under John, the English affairs declined; and though St. Louis, moved by scruples of honour and conscience, restored to Henry the third all Saintonge, and Aunis, yet his son, Philip the Bold, re-conquered them again some years after. The battle of Poitiers, under Edward the third, was followed by the surrender of all the adjoining provinces and cities. Rochelle constituted part of the dominions given to the Black Prince by his father; but his reign was very short, and he lived to see them again re-united to France by Charles the fifth, in the latter years of Edward's reign.

The Reformed religion, which was first introduced into the kingdom about 1540,

met

met with a most favourable reception here ; and this city became, under Charles the ninth, the grand asylum of the Protestants. The massacre of Paris was followed soon after by the memorable siege, which began in November 1572, and was raised in June 1573. Enthusiasm supplied the besieged with a constancy and courage, that rendered them superior to the assailants : and the Duke of Anjou, who commanded the royal army, was happy to find a pretext, in his election to the crown of Poland, for withdrawing his shattered troops, after having lost twenty-two thousand men before the place. This success conduced to inspire them with resolution to withstand Louis the thirteenth, in 1627 ; but Richlieu's daring genius was not to be awed into any submission. After having precluded every source of assistance by sea and land, and held it invested thirteen months, it surrendered to the royal clemency. The calamities which the garrison endured from famine, are only to be compared with

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those

those of Jerufalem under Titus, and perhaps even exceed them. It was the laſt effort of religious oppoſition, and the æra which eſtabliſhed an unlimited regal power throughout the kingdom.

I went yeſterday twice, to view the dyke ſo renowned, erected by Richlieu. When the ſea retires, it is viſible; and I walked out upon it above three hundred feet. It extends from ſide to ſide, acroſs the harbour, nearly an Engliſh mile in length. Its breadth is, at this time, more than one hundred and fifty feet, and it widens continually towards the baſe. No monument of architecture, however ſuperb or beautiful, no production of elegance, however refined, can poſſibly impreſs the mind with ſo vaſt and ſublime an idea of the genius of Richlieu, as does this bulwark againſt the ſea. While I ſtood upon it, in the middle of the port, between the waves which rolled on either ſide, and contemplated its durability, extent, and ſtrength, I was almoſt inclined to ſuppoſe this wondrous work ſuperior  
to



to human power, and the production rather of a deity than of a mortal. A small opening, of about two hundred feet, was left to give entrance to vessels, and shut up by chains stretched across. A tower was likewise constructed at each end, no vestiges of which now remain. Neither Buckingham, or Lindsey, who were successively sent to the aid of the besieged by Charles the first, dared to attack this formidable barrier: they retired, and left La Rochelle to its fate. In all probability, the lapse of a thousand years, aided by storms, and all the fury of the sea, will make little or no impression on this dyke, which is designed to endure as long as the Cardinal's fame, who dared to construct it.

From the northern point of the harbour, is a fine view of the three islands, Ré, Oleron, and Aix. It was on the former that the duke of Buckingham landed, and, after his fruitless attempt on the citadel of St. Martin, was repulsed with the loss of eight thousand men.

This

This island, which is only six leagues in length, is separated from the main land by a channel of three miles. It contains, I am assured, twenty thousand inhabitants, and is better cultivated than the finest province of France: while Oleron, which is more than double its size, has not near that number of people, and is neither rich, or in the same state of improvement. This results from their different political situation, the island of Ré being free, and exempt from all imposts or taxation.

On the southern side of the port stands a convent of Minims, erected by Louis the thirteenth, after the termination of the siege, in 1628, to pray for the souls of those who perished before La Rochelle. When Charles the ninth began to invest it, there were then seventy-two thousand persons in the city. In the second siege, they had diminished to twenty-eight thousand; and at present, the inhabitants are only between seventeen and eighteen thousand; of which scarce two thousand are

Hugonots

Hugonots.—Religious animosity has entirely subsided: the citizens are accounted as loyal, as well attached to the crown, as any of France; and Louis the fifteenth permitted the inscriptions engraven on copper, and affixed by Richlieu on either side the doors of the monastery I mentioned, to be taken down a few years since, solemnly broken, and thrown into the sea.—I purpose to leave Rochelle tomorrow, and shall take the rout of Rochfort and Saintes.

A gentleman with whom I supped last night assured me, that the family of d'Olbreuse exists still, and that they reside near Chateaufneuf, upon the Charente, in Angoumois. He added, that their circumstances were narrow almost to distress. You will surely recollect, that this house is allied to the blood royal of England. George-William, the last duke of Zell, married Mademoiselle d'Olbreuse, at Breda, about the middle of the last century. They had only one daughter, the beautiful and unhappy Sophia, so well known for her misfortunes,

misfortunes, and mother to his late majesty George the second.

The weather here is the most serene and delightful to be imagined. The vintage is already begun round the city; and the peasants are engaged in all that happy festivity natural to the season and the employment. I shall have the pleasure of seeing this scene continued to the foot of the Pyrenees, as they do not begin their vintage in Guyenne and Gascony till the middle or close of October.

This is a long, historical letter. It is time to finish it, and subscribe myself, &c. &c.

Saintes,



Saintes, Sunday, September 24th, 1775.

THE distance from La Rochelle to Rochfort is seven leagues. The first four are exceedingly pleasant, the road lying along the sea-shore, and in view of the islands Oleron and Aix, which appear at a small distance. It is now almost a century since Louis the fourteenth constructed Rochfort. The city is built in the midst of marshes, which were drained for that purpose. Colbert was then prime minister, and it is said, he used to call it “La Ville d’Or,” from the prodigious sums his master had expended in its erection. Time has, however, given the sanction of utility to the project, and rendered this port as necessary and important to the crown of France, as either Brest or Toulon. It is situate on the Charente, about five leagues from its mouth. I spent several hours, Friday morning, in the different magazines and dock-yards. Every thing appears to be under

under an admirable regulation; and the several branches of naval equipment are carried on with the utmost vigour and dispatch. It seems to be a grand object of attention with the present ministry to restore the navy, almost totally destroyed during the late war.

The number of workmen commonly employed at Rochfort, is about nine hundred. To these are added six hundred galley slaves, who are occupied in the most painful and laborious parts of service. They are chained two and two with heavy fetters, constantly guarded, and kept in a long building erected for that purpose in the center of the yard. Some of these wretches are thus kept for a term of years; others during life. The precautions used to prevent their escape are very excellent, dictated by great discernment, and improved on continually by experience—yet, in spite of every obstacle, they continually elude them.

The armoury, the rope-walks, the store-houses of every kind, are all in the best order,

order, and kept with prodigious neatness. Louis the fourteenth fortified the city at the time he erected it; but its situation, at so considerable a distance from the sea, renders it sufficiently secure from any attack, and they have therefore lately closed up the battlements, and neglected the fosses. It is laid out with great beauty and elegance. The streets are all very broad and strait, traversing the whole place from side to side; but the buildings do not correspond to them in this respect, as they are mostly low and irregular.

The province of Saintonge begins at a small distance from Rochfort: this city is the capital of it. The antiquities which Saintes yet presents, have chiefly detained me here since yesterday morning. It was a Roman colony, and those conquerors of the earth, who polished the nations they subdued, have left the traces of their magnificence behind them. In a hollow valley, between two mountains, and almost adjoining to one of the suburbs, are the ruins of the amphitheatre. Though

now in the last stage of decay, its appearance is very august and venerable. In some parts, scarce any of the arches are to be seen; but the east end is still in a great degree of preservation. From its situation in a valley, and from the ruins of an aqueduct which conveyed water to the town near three leagues, it has been supposed that Naumachiæ were represented in it, but this amounts only to conjecture. A triumphal arch, on which is an inscription in Roman letters, merits likewise attention. It was erected to Germanicus, on the news of his death, so universally lamented throughout the empire.

The river Charente surrounds this city, as the Severn does that of Shrewsbury, forming a horse-shoe. I have been walking in the beautiful meadows which border it, and from whence the buildings of the town have a fine effect. Though the Charente cannot compare with the Loire or the Rhone in size and depth, yet the actions which have been performed on its banks, in different ages, will render it  
immortal



immortal in story. At Taillebourg, only six miles from hence, nearer to its mouth, was fought the battle between Henry the third of England, and St. Louis, where the latter was conqueror, and in which he gave proofs of undaunted prowess and intrepidity, in defending almost alone, the passage of a bridge against the whole opposite army, during some minutes. Francis the first, the most amiable and accomplished prince who ever reigned in France, except Henry the fourth, was born at Cognac, only seven leagues higher up on the Charente. Two leagues beyond Cognac, still nearer its source, is the famous plain of Jarnac, where the Hugonots were beat by the duke of Anjou, and where the Great Louis, first prince of Condé was assassinated by Montesquiou. I am told the Count de Jarnac has caused a monument to be erected within these few years over the spot where perished that unhappy prince. I intended fully to have gone along the banks of the Charente, through both these last mentioned places,

to Angoulesme; but the difficulties are insuperable. There is neither a post road, nor horses yet established; and I therefore pursue the strait rout to Bourdeaux, through Pons and Blaye.

Except the remains of Roman grandeur yet visible at Saintes, the place contains very little to detain or amuse. It is built with great irregularity; the streets are narrow and winding; the houses mean, and almost all of them some centuries old. The cathedral has been repeatedly ravaged and destroyed by Normans and Hugonots, who made war alike on every monument of art or piety. One tower only escaped their rage, which is said to have been constructed as early as the year eight hundred, by Charlemagne. It is of enormous magnitude, both as to circumference and heighth. These qualities, superadded to its prodigious thickness and strength, have probably conduced to preserve it in the storms of war, more than any veneration for the memory of its founder,

founder, or regard to the sanctity of its institution.

The Reformed Religion seems far on the decline in this province, where antiently it had gained so many votaries. There is only one Protestant family, as I am assured, in Saintes: the reason is evident; — the fervours of devotion, warm and animated in the beginning, are nourished by persecution, but unhappily become languid and extinct in an age of more mild and tolerating principles. Interest is ever present, ever intimately felt by mankind. The Established Religion holds out offices and honours: Protestantism is barren. Her rewards are in another world. Can you wonder that it loses ground continually? Adieu!

Your's, &c. &c.

Bourdeaux, Friday, 7th October, 1775.

I Continued my journey from Saintes last Sunday se'nnight, and slept at Pons, a small town agreeably situate on a hill. Near the summit, in the centre of the place, is an antient chateau belonging to the prince de Marfan; it commands an extensive and luxuriant prospect of the vales of Saintonge and Angoumois, covered with vines, and watered by two or three fine rivulets which lose themselves, after many windings, in the Charente. I entered the province of Guyenne the ensuing day, and arrived at Blaye, on the bank of the Garonne, Tuesday morning. I put my carriage into a boat, and came up to this city by water; the distance is about seven leagues. At Blaye, the river is above four miles in breadth, but it diminishes insensibly as one approaches Bourdeaux. Nearly half way between the two places, is the mouth of the Dordogne, which after running through  
the



the Limosin and Perigord, empties itself into the Garonne. The prospect at the conflux of these two streams, is wonderfully picturesque. It is more cultivated and pleasing, though less sublime and magnificent than that at the junction of the Vistula and the Nogat, near Marienbourg, in Polish Prussia.

Our passage from Blaye was long, and the sun declined as we turned round a point of land, which opened to us the city of Bourdeaux at the distance of three miles. The effect on the spectator is exceedingly august and striking. It describes the figure of a crescent more than a league in length, the buildings of which near the water-side, are all modern, lofty, and very elegant. I have seen no Coup d'œil so superb in Europe, except the view of Lisbon from the tower of Belem on the Tagus, which though more irregular from the nature of its situation, is rather superior in magnificence.

The favourable impression which Bourdeaux cannot fail to make on a stranger

at his arrival, is well confirmed by a residence in it. Pleasure seems to have as many votaries here as commerce; luxury and industry reign within the same walls, and that in the most extended degree. The air of courts is ever effeminate, seductive, and voluptuous. Commercial cities are usually marked by opposite manners, and the love of gain powerful in its influence over the human heart, swallows up and absorbs the more soft and melting passions. Here, however, these rules are entirely controverted. Dissipation and debauchery are more openly patronized, and have made a more universal and apparent conquest, than in half the capitals of Europe. At Stockholm, scarce the shadow of them is perceivable. Neither Copenhagen nor St. Peterburgh are yet advanced to the same point of excess, tho' aided by the presence of a sovereign, and the pleasures which follow in their train. Hamburgh, though perhaps as large, as commercial, and as opulent as Bourdeaux, betrays no external marks of the dissolution

tion of manners, and punishes them, when visible, with extreme severity. It is natural to seek for the reason of this extraordinary contrast. We shall find it, I apprehend, chiefly in the genius of the nation, gallant and amorous; in the spirit of the government, which rather encourages than represses the arts of luxury among all ranks of people. Devotion or superstition, the only engine capable of opposing the torrent, has ceased in France, where the Virgin is held in as little estimation as among us.—Divest mankind of the influence which religion, policy, and decorum has over them—what restraint can be affixed to their licentious passions?

The ancient city of Bourdeaux, though considerable, was, what every other in Europe might be esteemed at the accession of Louis the fourteenth, ill built, badly paved, dangerous, nasty, without police or any of those regulations indispensably requisite to constitute a splendid or elegant place. It has entirely changed its appear-

ance within these last thirty years. The public edifices are very noble, and all the streets newly constructed are regular and handsome. I am never tired with walking on the banks of the Garonne. The quays are four miles in length, and the river itself is broader considerably than the Thames at London bridge. On the opposite side, a range of hills covered with woods, vineyards, churches and villas, extends beyond the view.

Almost in the center of the town, is a fine equestrian statue in bronze erected to the late king in 1743. It is very rarely that I am much affected by the inscriptions under the figures of princes, usually only a detail of virtues and qualities they never possessed. There is something so pathetic and simple, addressed to the heart, and not designed to dazzle, in this, that I have retained it in my memory.

“ Ludovico quindecimo,

“ Sæpe victori, semper pacificatori ;

“ Suos omnes, quam late regnum patet

“ Paterno pectore gerenti ;

“ Suorum in animis penitus habitanti.”

The



The beauty of the river, and the fertility of the adjoining country were probably the causes which induced the Romans to lay the foundations of this city. The ruins of a very large amphitheatre yet remain, constructed under the emperor Galienus ; it is of brick, as are most of the edifices of that period, when the empire was verging to its fall, and the arts began to decline.

In the irruption of the barbarous nations, and peculiarly in those which the Normans repeatedly made, Bourdeaux was ravaged, burnt, and almost entirely destroyed. It only began to recover again under Henry the second of England, who having united it to the crown by his marriage with Eleanor, rebuilt it, and made it a principal object of his policy, to restore it again to the lustre from which it had fallen.

The Black Prince received all Guyenne, Gascony, and many inferior provinces in full sovereignty from his father : he brought his royal captive to this city af-

ter the battle of Poitiers, and held his court and residence here during eleven years. His exalted character, his uninterrupted series of good fortune, his victories, his modesty, his affability, and his munificence, drew strangers from every part of Europe ; but all this splendour soon sunk into night. He lived to experience the ingratitude of the man to whom he had restored a kingdom ; he became a prey to distempers in the vigour of life ; he saw his dominions reunited again, in many of their branches, to the crown of France ; he lost his eldest son, a prince of the highest expectations ; and at length, overcome with sorrow at this last affliction, he quitted Bourdeaux, and re-embarked for England, to expire, a memorable example of the hasty revolution of human greatness. In 1453, Charles the seventh re-entered it, and subjected the whole province, which had been near three centuries under the English government. Conscious of the importance of such a conquest, he ordered the “ Chateau Trom-  
“ pette”

“ pette” to be constructed to defend the passage of the river ; and Louis the fourteenth employed the celebrated Vauban to erect a new fortress, in the modern style of military architecture, on the same spot. — Madame de Maintenon, whom fortune seemed to have chosen as the object of her extreamest rigour, and extreamest bounty, was removed from the prisons of Niort in Poictou where she was born, with her father the Baron d’Aubigné, to this castle, where she used to play with the daughter of the turnkey, in the extreamest indigence.

Bordeaux presents few remains of antiquity. The cathedral appears to have been erected very early, and has suffered considerably during the lapse of centuries since its construction. The unfortunate duke of Guyenne, brother to Louis the eleventh, lies buried before the high altar.—The adjacent country, more peculiarly the “ Pays de Medoc,” which produces the finest clarets, is exceedingly pleasant ;  
and

and at this season when the peasants are all engaged in the vintage, it is one of the most delicious landscapes in the world. My stay here will probably be some days longer. Meanwhile I remain, &c.



Ausck in Armagnac,  
Saturday, 14th October, 1775.

**I** LEFT Bourdeaux last Tuesday morning, and took the road to Agen, along the southern bank of the Garonne, through the Bourdelois. I crossed the river at Langon, a little town pleasantly situate on its banks, and stopped in the evening at La Reole. It was my intention to have proceeded farther, but the landlady was too eloquent: she offered to send her little boy who would conduct me over the ruins of the castle, while she herself prepared a brace of partridges, and the finest dessert in the world, against my return. I suffered myself to be persuaded, and walked out. The sun had set, but the sky was without a cloud, and the air perfectly serene. The castle overhangs the waters of the Garonne, and is reflected in its surface: time has crumbled many of the battlements into ruin, but enough yet remains to evince its former

former greatness. Catherine of Medicis resided in it some time, during one of the journies which she made into the southern provinces; and Henry the fourth, then only king of Navarre, had here an interview with her, when he became enamoured of the beautiful Mademoiselle d'Ayelle, one of her maids of honour.

I dined the ensuing day at Aiguillon. On the hill above the town, stands the chateau of the celebrated duke d'Aiguillon, who has lived to experience the most cruel reverse of fortune; and after having been the minister and the favourite of Louis the fifteenth, is now sentenced to spend the remainder of his days, an exile in his own palace, without power, and unaccompanied even with that compassion which often waits on illustrious persons in disgrace. He has been here already some months, happy, if royal vengeance pursue him no farther, and the stories of a Fouquet or a Marechal d'Ancre are not again renewed in him.

I reached Agen in the afternoon. The country through which I passed from Langon

gon where I crossed the Gáronne, to the gates of that city, is luxurious, and fertile beyond any I have seen in Europe. The hills are all covered with vineyards to the summit, and the vallies scarce require the industry of the peasants to produce in plenty whatever is necessary to their subsistence. The climate at this time is delicious; no marks of winter appear in any of the productions of nature. Cherry trees, fig, acacia, poplar, and elms, are in full verdure: in many places, where they border the road on either side, the vines have run up, and mingled their clusters among the boughs: this is truly pastoral. Milton, in his divine flights of imagination could employ our first parents in no more delightful occupation, even in Paradise.—

“ Or they led the vine

“ To wed her elm; she round about him throws

“ Her marriageable arms; and with her brings

“ Her dower, th’ adopted clusters, to adorn

“ His barren leaves.”

In the midst of this charming country, in a plain, close to the Garonne, stands the city of Agen. Behind it, to the north, rises a very high hill, called “ Le Rocher de la belle Vue.” I went up to the top, where there is a convent. The chapel, and some of the adjoining cells are hollowed into the rock. It is said these excavations are very ancient, and were made many centuries ago by solitaries or hermits, who retired here from motives of devotion and austerity. The prospect is enchanting, commanding over the Condomois, Agenois, and Armagnac : beneath, lies the city of Agen, and through the meadows which surround it, rolls the Garonne. A monk shewed me the apartments of the convent ; and in the recesses of the rock he led me to a spring which is never dry, and which he assured me had been opened by miracle, at the intercession of some holy recluse in ages past. Their little refectory was hung with portraits of the same heroes, among which was St. William duke of Aquitaine ; and  
at



at the upper end, in golden letters, was written "Silentium."

Agen is a very mean and disagreeable place: the houses are inelegant, the streets narrow, crooked, and dirty. I saw only one building in it, which appeared deserving curiosity; it is a chapel belonging to a nunnery of Carmelites. The walls are exquisitely painted in *claro obscuro*, and the deception of the roof, which is executed in the same manner, is one of the finest to be imagined. The high altar is magnificent, and adorned with a painting, the subject of which is very interesting. It is a nun, sinking under the transports of holy enjoyment. She appears incapable of supporting the divine effulgence of her celestial lover, with eyes half closed, and arms expanded. Above, descends a radiant figure, with looks of tenderness and pleasure, surrounded with the glories of the skies, too strong for mortal sight. If it had not been a religious edifice, I should have supposed it to be the story of Jupiter and Semelé, to

which it bears the aptest resemblance. Near the piece is this inscription.

“ Quid non conatur Amor !

“ Cœlos in Terris adumbrare

“ Carmeli Filiæ tentarunt,

“ Anno salutis

“ 1773.”

Surely, you must here be struck with the justice of a remark we have often made together, on the intimate alliance between love and devotion ; between the religious and the amorous passion, when carried to an excess. The same enthusiasm, the same melting language, the same overpowering delights, are common to both. Love, says Rousseau, in the extreme, borrows the language of Devotion ; and Devotion, in her flights, adopts the expressions of attachment and fondness.

We are used to apprehend the condition of a young woman who has taken the veil to be very miserable. Where convenience, or chagrin, or melancholy, are the motives to it, I fully coincide in that opinion ;

nion ; but there are, I doubt not, who in the gloom of a convent, amid shrines and crucifixes, are yet supremely happy. Married to a heavenly spouse, and dedicated to the embraces of a superior and invisible being, Enthusiasm has ample room to exert her powers, and raise her votary above the poor gratifications of earth.

“ To sounds of heav’nly harps she dies away,

“ And melts in visions of eternal day.”

But I return —

Agen has been fortified anciently, and the battlements and turrets yet remain almost entire round the whole place. Margaret of Valois, daughter of Henry the second of France, and wife to Henry the fourth, so renowned for her genius, her adventures, and her gallantries, kept her little court some time at this city, during the civil wars which desolated France, and the quarrels which subsisted between her husband and brothers.—The Agenois was part of that fine domain, which by the peace of Bretigni, in 1360, was ceded

to the crown of England, and constituted part of the territories governed by the Black Prince. It followed the fate of Guyenne under Charles the seventh, who re-conquered it from us.

I continued my journey from Agen, Thursday evening. At Layrac I once more crossed the Garonne. The passage is difficult, and sometimes dangerous, the river being very rapid, and running between high banks.—I stopt a few hours yesterday morning at the city of Leytoure. As it is situate on a mountain, the access to which is very steep, I left my carriage below, and walked up alone. Here, from the summit, I had the first view of the Pyrenees, at the distance of ninety miles; their heads lost in clouds, and covered with eternal snow. While I stood gazing on these stupendous mountains, a gentleman very politely accosted me, and seeing I was a stranger, offered me his services to shew me whatever curiosities the city contained.

“ This place,” said he, “ was a Ro-

“ man



“ man colony, and called by them Lec-  
 “ toura. Many antiquities have been  
 “ found here; and a beautiful fountain,  
 “ which springs from the side of the hill  
 “ near the episcöpal palace, is declared  
 “ by immemorial tradition to have been  
 “ consecrated to Diana, who had a temple  
 “ near it. In succeeding ages, it be-  
 “ longed to the Counts of Armagnac,  
 “ great vassals of the crown, and fove-  
 “ reign princes in their own territories.  
 “ The last of these, John the fifth, was  
 “ put to death in this city. His history  
 “ was very singular. He began his reign  
 “ in 1450. The youngest of his sisters,  
 “ Isabella, was a princess of uncommon  
 “ beauty and accomplishments; the Count  
 “ conceived a passion for her, and, unable  
 “ to repress or extinguish it, he deter-  
 “ mined, in defiance of every obstacle, to  
 “ make her his wife. He married her  
 “ publicly. The reigning Pope, scanda-  
 “ lised at this incestuous union, de-  
 “ nounced against him a sentence of ex-  
 “ communication; and Charles the se-

“ venth, king of France, prepared to en-  
“ force it by the seizure of his dominions.  
“ He sent the Dauphin, afterwards Louis  
“ the eleventh, into Armagnac, at the  
“ head of a body of forces. The unhappy  
“ Count, abandoned by his subjects, and  
“ incapable of resistance, fled to Fonta-  
“ rabia, carrying with him his beloved  
“ sister. At the intercession of the Count  
“ de Foix, he received his pardon, and  
“ was restored to his possessions. He re-  
“ turned, leaving the beautiful and un-  
“ happy Isabel in Spain, where she died  
“ in the utmost obscurity. — Louis the  
“ eleventh, less generous and merciful  
“ than his father, determined on the  
“ Count’s destruction, from the desire of  
“ uniting to the crown his ample fief.  
“ He declared war against him, and in  
“ 1473 an army, under the command of  
“ Peter de Beaujeu, was sent into Armag-  
“ nac. John the fifth retired to Ley-  
“ toure, in which he was invested. He  
“ capitulated on very honourable terms,  
“ and on the most solemn promises of  
“ being

“ being continued in his dominions.—  
 “ But while the treaty was on the point  
 “ of being signed, and the Count, con-  
 “ fiding in the honour of the King, re-  
 “ mitted his usual vigilance, the foldiery  
 “ broke into the town, and he was him-  
 “ self murdered in his palace, fome ves-  
 “ tiges of which are yet remaining. Louis  
 “ immediately feized on his poffeffions, as  
 “ efcheated to the crown.”

I listened to this affecting story with  
 great attention. When the gentleman  
 had concluded it, he conducted me to the  
 brow of the mountain, where are ftill the  
 remains of a caftle. “ In this fortrefs,”  
 faid he, (renewing his difcourfe) “ the  
 “ noble and unfortunate Marechal de  
 “ Montmorenci was confined, after the  
 “ combat of Caftelnaudari, in 1632. So  
 “ amiable was his character, fo general  
 “ the attachment borne to him, and fo  
 “ detefted the Cardinal de Richlieu his  
 “ enemy, that the ladies of the place at-  
 “ tempted by a ftatagem to procure him  
 “ his liberty. They fent him, as a pre-

“ sent, a large pye, in which was con-  
 “ cealed a filken ladder of ropes. He  
 “ lost no time in endeavouring to profit  
 “ of this instrument for his escape; and  
 “ having fixed it, the same evening, to the  
 “ window of his apartment, he ordered  
 “ his valet to descend first, in the inten-  
 “ tion of following him; but the servant  
 “ having unfortunately missed his hold,  
 “ fell, and in the fall broke his thigh.  
 “ The centinels, alarmed at the cries he  
 “ uttered, ran to the spot, and inter-  
 “ cepted the Marechal. He was conducted  
 “ to Toulouse, and put to death.”

My polite conductor quitted me, and I  
 continued my walk.——Leytoure occu-  
 pies a level space of more than half a  
 mile in circumference. The fortifications  
 in many parts are yet entire; and the  
 situation, admirably calculated for defence,  
 was probably the motive which induced  
 the Romans to fix their residence there.

I left Leytoure at noon, and arrived  
 here last night, the distance being only  
 five-and-twenty miles. This city is the  
 capital



capital of Armagnac. Like the last, it lies on the summit and declivity of a hill, which descends very rapidly on every side. Other hills rise at a small distance, and invest it round. Through the vale below runs a rivulet, called the Gers. The inhabitants are about six thousand, the buildings modern and elegant; the streets, though in general narrow, yet clean, and well paved. In the center of the city stands the cathedral. It is one of the most magnificent in France, both as to the construction and internal decorations. The painted windows are only inferior to those of Gouda in Holland. The chapels are of equal beauty, and adorned with prodigious expence.

The revenues of the see, which is archiepiscopal, amount annually to three hundred thousand livres. The palace corresponds to these ample possessions, and is a very handsome structure. The apartments are furnished with a voluptuous splendour, rather becoming a temporal than a spiritual prince; and in the chamber  
where

where the archbishop himself sleeps, I could not help smiling at a number of holy relics, which he has disposed round a bed, on which Heliogabalus might have reposed. The library is very ample, and adorned with some portraits. Among these, a fine head of the Cardinal de Polignac drew my attention. There is infinite genius marked in the countenance. A pale face; the contour oval; an aquiline nose, and an eye looking forward into futurity. Over the scarlet robe hangs the cross of the Holy Ghost, on his breast. He was archbishop of Auch, as they informed me.

The country through which I have passed, to the south of the Garonne, is much more hilly, or rather mountainous, than that on the other side. It is not, however, less fertile or agreeable. Though I am assured every article of life is more than doubled in price within these last ten years, yet this province is still one of the cheapest in the kingdom. The common wine is at present only five liards a bottle.

Hares,

Hares, partridges, and most kinds of game, are in vast abundance. Add to this, a happy climate, and a people polite and gay from natural disposition, and you'll allow that a man must be very splenetic, who would die here of ennui.

To-morrow I continue my journey to Tarbes, and Pau. Meanwhile I am, &c.

Orthez in Bearn,

Saturday, 21st October, 1775.

**A**RMAGNAC is a hilly and romantic country, abounding in beautiful prospects, where the savage and the cultivated is finely blended. At Rabasteins, a little town, I entered the province of Bigorre, and got the same evening to Tarbes, which is the capital. My intention was to have visited Barege, so famous for its medicinal baths; but its situation in the midst of the Pyrenees, where winter has already begun, and which are covered at this time with snow, has induced me to relinquish my design. I spent a day at Bagnères de Bigorre. This place is hardly less celebrated than the former. It is only about twelve miles distant from Tarbes, and the road lies through a rich vale, at the termination of which, immediately under the Pyrenean mountains, stands the town. It has been crowded with company during the summer,



mer, who are now forsaking it. Nothing can exceed the environs of Bagnères in beauty. Even at this season, when nature is declining in gaiety, and the leaves begin to take the hue of autumn, it yet retains a thousand charms. The Pyrenees, which rise above it, and whose craggy summits are lost in clouds, form an object the most august and magnificent to be imagined; while on the other side appear fertile vallies covered with vines, and interspersed with hamlets. There are many springs near Bagnères, both warm and cold, which issue out of the mountains, and are of different virtues. Those called “*Les bains de salut*,” are the principal, about half a mile from the place, and the walk to which, between the hills, is wondrously agreeable.

I cannot but regret that the year is too far advanced to permit me to spend some weeks among the Pyrenees. An admirer of nature must find ample subject for investigation, and equal sources of delight, amid the various extraordinary scenes which

which present themselves in this chain of rocks, stretching from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. It would seem as if they were designed to form a barrier between France and Spain, which no union of blood or policy can ever effectually surmount, notwithstanding the celebrated words of Louis the fourteenth to his grandson, when ready to set out for Madrid—"Mon fils, il n'y a plus des Pyrenees."

I left Tarbes Wednesday last, and got to Pau in six hours, the distance not exceeding thirty miles. The province of Bearn begins about a league from Tarbes, at the ascent of a very steep and lofty hill, which divides it from Bigorre. The city of Pau will be for ever memorable in history, since it was the birth-place of Henry the fourth. This immortal prince was born in the castle, then the residence of the kings of Navarre. You will not doubt that I visited it with equal pleasure and accuracy. It stands on one of the most romantic and singular spots I have

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ever

ever seen, at the west end of the town, upon a rock which terminates perpendicular and abrupt. Below, runs the Gave, a river, or rather a torrent, that rises in the Pyrenees, and empties itself into the Adour. On the other side, about two miles off, is a ridge of hills, covered with vineyards, which produce the famous "Vin de Jorençon," so much admired; and beyond all, at the distance of nine leagues, appear the Pyrenees themselves, covering the horizon from east to west, and bounding the prospect. The castle, though now in a state of decay, is yet habitable; and the apartments are hung with tapestry, said to be the work of Jane queen of Navarre, and mother to Henry the fourth. Gaston the fourth, Count de Foix, who married Leonora, heiress of the crown of Navarre, began the edifice in 1464; but Henry d'Albret completed and enlarged it, about the year 1519, when he made choice of Pau to reside in; and where, during the remainder of his reign, he held his little court.

In

In a chamber, which by its size, was formerly a room of state, is a fine length portrait of that Jane whom I have just mentioned. Her dress resembles those in which our Elizabeth is usually depicted, and is very splendid. The head-dress is adorned with pearls ; round her neck she wears a ruff ; and her arms, which are likewise covered with pearls, are concealed quite to the wrist by her habit. At her waist hangs a miniature portrait by a chain. The fingers of her right hand play on the strings of a guittar ; and in her left she holds an embroidered handkerchief. The painter has drawn her as young, yet not in the first bloom of youth. Her features are regular. It is a thin countenance, rather long ; the eyes hazel, and the eye-brows finely arched. Her nose is well formed, though large ; and her mouth pretty. She was a great princess, of high spirit, and undaunted magnanimity. Her memory is not cherished by the French, because she was the protectress of the Hugonots, and the friend



friend of Coligni; but the actions of her life evince her merit.

In one of the adjoining chambers, is another portrait, of Henry the fourth as a boy; and on the second floor, is the apartment in which he was born. The particulars of his birth are in themselves so curious, and as relating to so great and good a prince, are so peculiarly interesting, that I doubt not you will forgive my enumerating them, even though you should have seen them elsewhere.—His mother Jane had already lost two sons, the duke de Beaumont, and the count de Marle. Henry d'Albret, her father, anxious to see an heir to his dominions, enjoined her, when she accompanied her husband Anthony of Bourbon to the wars of Picardy, if she became with child, to return to Pau, and lye in, as he would himself superintend the education of the infant, from the moment of it's birth. He threatened to disinherit her, if she failed to comply with this injunction. The princess, in obedience to the

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king's command, being in the ninth month of her pregnancy, quitted Compiègne in the end of November, traversed all France in fifteen days, and arrived at Pau, where she was delivered of a son, on the thirteenth December 1553. She was desirous to see her father's will, which he kept in a golden box; and he promised to put it into her hands, provided she admitted of his being present at her delivery, and would, during the pains of labour, sing a song in the Bearnois language. She had courage enough to perform this unusual request; and the king being called down on the news of her illness, she immediately sung a Bearnois song, beginning, "Notre Dame, du  
"bout du pont, aidez moi en cette heure."  
—As she finished it, Henry was born. The king instantly performed his promise, by giving her the box, together with a golden chain, which he tyed about her neck; and taking the infant into his own apartment, he began by making him swallow some drops of wine, and rubbing his lips with

a root of garlic. The manner of his being brought up was similar, and almost unexampled in a prince. He was sent to the castle of Coarace in Bearn ; where, without any regard to his quality, he used to run about with the children of the neighbouring peasants, barefooted and bareheaded, even in the severity of winter. This formed his body to fatigue and hardship; for the exercise of which he had no little occasion during his future life, in the long wars with Henry the third, and the duke of Mayenne. They still shew a tortoise shell which served him for a cradle, and is preserved on that account.

Several of the sovereigns of Navarre resided and died in the castle of Pau. Francois Phœbus, who mounted the throne in 1479, expired here in 1483. He was only sixteen years of age, his mother being regent. The young king, who was passionately fond of music, having taken up a flute, had no sooner applied it to his mouth, than he felt himself struck with a poison so violent, that he died in

two hours. This murder was attributed to Ferdinand of Arragon, a man whose character justified the worst imputations, and who seized on the kingdom soon after. Catherine de Foix succeeded her brother Francois Phœbus. She married John d'Albret; and was the last real queen of Navarre, only an empty title having remained to her successors. She died of grief for the loss of her dominions, which was chiefly caused by the incapacity and cowardice of her husband. Her reproach to him was very poignant: "Dom Jean," said she, "si nous fussions  
"nés, vous Catherine de Foix, et moi  
"Dom Jean d'Albret, nous n'aurions ja-  
"mais perdu la Navarre!"

Pau is a handsome city, well built, and contains near six thousand inhabitants. It is a modern place, having owed its formation entirely to the castle, and the residence which the kings of Navarre made in it.

I pursued my journey this morning. The country from Pau to Orthez is mostly



mostly level, finely cultivated, and abounding in vines. The peasants speak a jargon unintelligible even to the French. Their dress too differs very much from those worn in Guyenne, and both that and their complexions bear a resemblance to the Spanish.—This place is a city and bishopric, but the meanest, I believe, in France. The cathedral is a wretched edifice, very barbarous, very ancient, and very ruinous. I expected to have found some monuments of the kings of Navarre in it; but have been disappointed. The remains of the castle are very noble. Its situation is fine, on a hill, commanding the town of Orthez, and a great extent of country. The people call it “Le Chateau de la Reine Jeanne,” because that queen resided in it, during many years, in preference to Pau. Some of the apartments, though in ruins, may yet be entered. The princess Blanche, daughter to John king of Arragon and Navarre, was shut up, and died here. Her brother being dead, she became heiress to

the crown; but her father having delivered her into the hands of her younger sister Leonora, countess of Foix, she confined her in the castle of Orthez, and after an imprisonment of two years, caused her to be poisoned in 1464.

History, from its earliest commencement to the present century, presents only a frightful picture of massacres, perfidies and crimes, at which humanity recoils. We find ambition and subtlety almost always triumphant, while innocence, and the most amiable qualities, unless accompanied with vigour and capacity, usually conduct their unhappy possessors to violent or ignominious exits. —But I have done with reflections. It is late, and I set out to-morrow for Bayonne. Probably from thence, I may send you the conclusion of this letter.

Bayonne,

Bayonne, Wednesday, 25th October, 1775.

**I** Continued my journey last Sunday morning. The Pays de Bearn is a fine country, abounding in acclivities, and industriously cultivated.

I arrived at this city in the afternoon. It is one of the most agreeably situate in France, at the conflux of two rivers, the Adour and the Nive. The first is scarce less considerable than the Thames opposite Lambeth, and across it is a wooden bridge, which joins the place to a suburb called "Le Fauxbourg du St. Esprit." The Nive, which is small, and rises in the Pyrenees, intersects the centre of the city, and resembles one of the canals in Holland. Advantageous as this situation appears for commerce, that of Bayonne is not only inconsiderable, but diminishes yearly. The entrance into the Adour, which is about four miles below the town, is rendered both difficult and hazardous

from the sands which have collected, and form a bar across the mouth. Superadded to this inconvenience, the neighbourhood of Bourdeaux draws to it most of those articles of trade formerly exported from hence; and so rapidly have both the commerce and population declined, that the former is reduced to the shadow of what it once was, and the number of inhabitants has decreased within these last twelve years from twenty-one thousand to hardly ten thousand. It is notwithstanding a very agreeable place of residence, and furnishes in profusion all the requisites for human life. Wild fowl is in prodigious plenty, and the flavour exceedingly delicate. The sea and river supplies excellent fish. The “*Vin de Cap Breton*,” and the “*Vin d’Anglet*,” which are made in the adjoining country, infinitely exceed the miserable claret drank all over this part of the kingdom, and are sold at eight sous a bottle. They are surrounded with woods which render fuel one of the cheapest articles, and the climate itself is delicious, though



though the extreme vicinity of the Pyrenean mountains increases the cold in winter.

The buildings of the city are in general in an antique taste ; and some of the streets, like those of La Rochelle, have porticos on either side ; but the “ Place de Grammont ” on the bank of the Adour is adorned with very elegant modern houses, and public edifices. On an eminence in the midst of the town stands the cathedral. I could gain no other intelligence from the inhabitants respecting its construction, except that the English erected it during the time they were masters of Bayonne. It is a venerable pile ; and, to judge from the style and ornaments of the various parts, cannot be older than 1350. I have made several visits to it, in hopes of discovering some tombs or monuments of antiquity ; but there is not any thing except the relics of St. Leo, who was put to death here in 907, and whose bones are preserved in a splendid shrine, over the high altar.

Bayonne, though considered as a frontier

tier place, is very ill fortified, the ramparts and fosses being equally neglected. On the north side of the Adour, Louis the fourteenth caused a citadel to be constructed by Vauban, on a hill which commands the town, and there are always about a thousand soldiers kept here in garrison. Till the year 1193, this city and a considerable territory round it was governed by its own Viscounts. The English rendered themselves masters of it under the reign of Richard the first, and retained the possession till 1451, when Charles the seventh's victorious arms annexed it to the crown of France. It has never since been retaken, though Philip the third and fourth of Spain made each an attempt upon it.

The common people are called, from the name of the province in which Bayonne is situate, "Basques." Their dress is peculiar to themselves. The women comb the hair up on the crown of their heads, and cover it with a sort of cap exactly resembling a little turban. This has no inelegant effect. The complexions of

both sexes are darker considerably than in Guyenne, and they speak a jargon called the Basque, which has scarce any affinity either with the French, Spanish, or even the Gascon dialect.

I had some intention, before I arrived here, of visiting Pampelona, in the Spanish Navarre; but the advanced season, the Pyrenean mountains which render it very difficult to pass even in the smallest two-wheeled carriage, and above all, the mortality among the cattle, which has reigned a considerable time in this and the adjoining provinces, are such insuperable obstacles as compel me to relinquish my design.

At this city my journey to the southward terminates, and to-morrow I set out for Toulouse. I am under a necessity of taking the same rout by which I came as far as Auch, there being no other post-road in this part of France. I shall write as I proceed. Adieu!

Toulouse,

Toulouse, 8th November, 1775.

**T**HE country from Bayonne to the passage of the Adour, is heathy, woody, and sterile, neither well peopled nor cultivated in comparison with most parts of Bearn, and Bigorre. I got to Orthez in the evening. The sun had set, but after the finest day imaginable: I walked out, and prompted by a remaining curiosity to look once more at the ruins of the castle, I ascended the hill on which it stands, and spent a few minutes within the walls. The gloom of night began already to shade the chambers, and spread an awful melancholy through the whole edifice. As I passed out of the great gateway into the road on my return to the inn, an old peasant met me, and with infinite simplicity assured me, that it was already past the hour when the inhabitants ventured into the castle, because the apparition of a princess who had been murdered in it, walked at night; and that he himself



when young had seen and heard things very unusual, and very terrifying, in the great tower. This tradition of a murdered princess is certainly that of the unfortunate Blanche, whom I mentioned before; and was one of those catastrophes which naturally give birth among the credulous and superstitious multitude to tales of spectres, and all their train of horrors.

I dined at Pau, and passed some time in the "Parc d'Henri quatre." This is a beautiful wood, overhanging the Gave, and terminating at a point, from whence is an extensive and romantic prospect. As Henry, while he held his court in Bearn, was fond of this grove, it has retained his name.

I spent four days at Tarbes on my return. The town stands in the midst of a finely cultivated plain, but contains no objects of entertainment or instruction in itself.

Francis the first, at the marriage of his sister Margaret with Henry d'Albret,  
gave

gave her the Armagnac and Bigorre as a dowry ; and that celebrated princess, so well known for her genius and writings, died at the “ Chateau d’Odos,” only a league from Tarbes, in 1549.

I crossed all Armagnac to this city, and arrived here the third of November. Toulouse is the most disagreeable and ill built place I have seen in France. It is a vast labyrinth, composed of streets so crooked, narrow and winding, that it requires a clue to conduct a stranger through them. No squares, or public places, adorned with elegant buildings, as at Nantes or Bourdeaux, though it equals this last in size. I almost accuse myself for having remained six days in a city, which presents scarce any thing to the eye or understanding ; and where the imagination cannot even receive that pleasing sensation which results from visiting the spot where great actions have been performed in past ages. The annals of Toulouse are marked with little besides acts of cruelty or superstition ; the death of a Montmorenci, and the execution of a Calas.

The

The cathedral is by no means a splendid pile of architecture. It was erected by Raymond the sixth about the year 1200. You will recollect that Languedoc was governed during several centuries by counts. Jane, the daughter and heiress of Raymond the seventh, was married to Alfonso, brother of Lewis the ninth, and by the death of these two princes, who expired within a few days of each other at Savona in Italy, immediately after St. Louis's miserable crusade and siege of Tunis, the county of Toulouse was united to the crown of France in 1271.

The tomb of Pibrac, whose name is so often mentioned under Henry the third, is in the church "de grands Augustins." This grave magistrate became amorous of the second Margaret, queen of Navarre, and sacrificed, as history declares, at the treaty of Nerac, his public duties to his attachment for that princess. In a history of this city which I procured on my arrival, a curious anecdote occurs relating to

to Margaret. — Catherine of Medicis, says the author, after the conference of Nerac, retired to Toulouse, carrying with her the queen of Navarre, who was tired of her husband and chagrined at his amours. The court, despairing of the queen of France's pregnancy, who had been married five years to Henry the third, was very desirous that Margaret might have children. Catherine, her mother, ever addicted to astrology, having heard that there resided at Castelnaudari, a woman famous for her skill in telling fortunes, and prying into futurity, went thither with her daughter to consult this “*Di-seure de bonne aventure.*” The princess was submitted in a state of nudity to the old woman's inspection, who examined all the parts of her person with extreme accuracy, and particularly those on which her judgment must naturally depend. She then returned this plain answer to the queen, with certain medicines which she had composed. “*Madame, votre fille est*  
“ *d'une très-bonne constitution, et je me*  
“ *promets*



“ promets un bon succès de mon re-  
 “ mede, pourvu qu'elle puisse gagner  
 “ sur elle de se tenir *chaste*, tout le  
 “ tems qui est marqué dans le regime;  
 “ car j'apprends que vous êtes mere et  
 “ fille de grandes *coureuses*.” Apparently  
 Margaret, whose constitution was of  
 the most amorous, found too great a  
 difficulty in submitting to a prescription  
 which precluded her those pleasures she  
 loved; nor could the person consulted  
 have found out any better means of pre-  
 serving her credit, than by laying her  
 royal patient under an injunction, which  
 the knowledge she had of her character  
 and complexion, rendered it very certain  
 she would infringe.

Toulouse has some internal commerce  
 by means of the famous canal cut to  
 join the two seas, which opens into the  
 Garonne just above the city, and con-  
 veys all the articles of trade from Cette  
 to Bourdeaux, across Languedoc and  
 Guyenne. This communication is how-

ever of little advantage to the place,  
 which owes all its gaiety to the parlia-  
 ment, and the Provincial noblesse, who  
 reside here in winter. I leave it this  
 afternoon, and am meanwhile,

Yours, &c,

Beziers,

Beziers, Monday, 13th November, 1775.

**I** Quitted Toulouse last Thursday, and slept at Castelnau-d'Aud, which is near forty miles distant : it is a tolerable town, and situate on the royal canal. The Saracens who conquered this part of France during the decay of the empire, are said to have been its founders. About half a mile from the place, in a hollow valley between two rising grounds, is the spot where the unfortunate duke of Montmorenci, cover'd with wounds, and thrown from his horse, was taken prisoner. I lamented as I stood on it, the fate of so good and amiable a prince. He was the Ruffel of France, who fell a sacrifice to the stern and unrelenting policy of Richelieu. The grandson of that Montmorenci, who expired in arms for the defence of the monarchy, at seventy-seven years of age ; son to Henry d'Amville, constable under Henry the fourth ; he himself of a character the most elevated, munifi-

cent, and benevolent; less guilty, even in his opposition to government, than Gaston duke of Orleans; and, though enemy of the minister, guiltless of rebellion against his sovereign.—How many circumstances to extenuate his crime! I cannot but regard this execution as one of those which tarnish in the highest degree the great name of Richlieu, and, amid all the splendor of his actions, force us to abhor the man.

It is about five-and-twenty miles from Castelnaudari to Carcassonne, where I staid the remainder of the ensuing day. Carcassonne consists of two distinct cities, separated by the little river Aude. The most ancient of these, called “La Haute Ville” stands on the summit of a hill; the lower town which is in the plain, is of superior size, and both are surrounded with Gothic walls, battlements and turrets, in the most perfect preservation. This place bore a considerable share in that celebrated crusade undertaken against the Albigeois in the beginning of the thirteenth



teenth century, and which forms one of the most astonishing displays of superstition and gross barbarity, to be found in the annals of the world.

During the reigns of the last kings of the Carlovingian race, when the royal power was nearly annihilated by their weakness, most of the cities in Languedoc erected themselves into little independent states, governed by their own princes. Carcassonne was under the dominion of Viscounts. At the time when pope Innocent the third patronized and commanded the commission of hostilities against these unhappy heretics, Raymond the reigning Viscount was included in the number. Simon de Montfort, general of the army of the church, invested the city in 1209. Terrified at the fate of several other places where the most horrible massacres had been committed, the inhabitants demanded to capitulate; but this act of grace was only extended to them under a condition, equally cruel, unparalleled, and incredible, if the unanimous testimony of

all the cotemporary writers did not force us to believe it. The people found in the place, were all obliged without distinction of rank or sex, to go out perfectly naked ; Agnez the Viscountess, was not exempted, though young and beautiful, from this ignominious and shocking punishment.

“ On les fit sortir tout nuds de la Ville de  
 “ Carcassonne (says an ancient author)  
 “ afin qu'ils receussent de la honte, en  
 “ montrant ces parties du corps que la  
 “ pureté de la langue n'exprime point,  
 “ desquelles ils avoient abusé, et s'en étoi-  
 “ ent servis dans des crimes execrables.”

It seems by this, that the Albigeois were accused by their enemies of some enormities, probably feigned ; and similar to those which religious enmity and prejudice has attributed to the followers of Zinzendorf in the present century.

I continued my journey Saturday to Narbonne ; the country from Toulouse to the gates of that city is very unpleasant ; it is a plain, open, naked, and in many parts, barren ; scarce a tree is to

be seen, except olives, and those neither large nor numerous. On one hand appear the Pyrenees at a considerable distance; and on the other, the chain of rocks, called the Black Mountains, which divide Languedoc from the province of Rouergue. The weather was cold, and I found it difficult to procure a miserable fire made of vine twigs, and roots of olives. The population is very thin likewise, and the appearance of every thing bleak and inhospitable. I went about a league out of the road near Carcassonne, to a little town called Trebé, where the canal passes over the river Aude, and got to Narbonne in the afternoon.

I must own I was infinitely disappointed in that city, which retains scarce any vestiges of its ancient grandeur. Narbonne, which pretends to the most remote antiquity under the Celtic kings, in ages previous to the Roman conquests; which under these latter masters, gave its name to all the "Gallia Narbonensis," and was a colony of the first consideration, is now

dwindled to a wretched, solitary town, containing scarce eight thousand persons, of whom three fourths are priests and women. The streets and buildings are mean and ruinous: it has a communication with the Mediterranean, from which it is about three leagues distant, by a small river which intersects the place; but their commerce is very limited, and chiefly consists in some grain which they export to Cette and Marseilles. No marks remain of Roman magnificence, except several inscriptions in different parts of the city; and if the churches did not keep employed some hundred ecclesiastics, who are occupied in the salutary and beneficial duties of chanting requiems and vespers, it would probably cease in a few years to exist at all.

The See is said to have been founded by Charlemagne, but the present cathedral is much more modern; only the choir remains, which is in the finest style of the Gothic edifices. In the center, before the high altar, is the tomb of Philip



lip the Bold. It is composed of white marble: the king is represented in an extended posture, his head repofing on a cushion powdered with fleurs de lis. The face is that of a man in the prime of life, the features regular and pleasing; he has a beard on the upper lip and chin, and his hair floats in great quantity on his neck. In his right hand is the dalmatique, resembling a pastoral staff; and in the left he holds a fceptre, and a hand of juftice. He has a regal crown on his head, and his feet reft on a lion. Behind, in the old black letter is this infcription.

“ Sepultura bonæ Memoriz

“ Philippi,

“ quondam Francorum Regis,

“ Filii beati Ludovici,

“ qui Perpignani calida Febre

“ ab hac Luce migravit,

“ 3 Non : Octobris,

“ Anno Dni 1285.”

You may perhaps recollect that Philip died at forty-five years of age, on his return from an ill concerted and unfortunate

nate expedition against the king of Arragon. The body was brought here from Perpignan, and the bones having been separated by boiling water from the flesh, were carried to St. Denis and interred there.

The distance from Narbonne to this city is twenty miles. The mountain of Malpas, which was cut through, to admit the passage of the royal Canal, lies only a mile out of the road. It was impossible to pass so extraordinary a work without visiting it. The effect produced on the spectator is sublime in the highest degree: a large flight of steps at either end, permits of gratifying curiosity by the minutest survey of it. I descended into the excavation, and walked through the mountain along the side of the canal. The length of it, is exactly two hundred and ten paces, or more than six hundred feet; and the perpendicular height from the water to the surface of the incumbent earth, is two hundred and two feet. A great part of the mountain has been vault-  
ed

ed at a vast expence, in the apprehension of its falling, from the prodigious weight; and the annual repairs necessary to it amount to a large sum. The breadth of the canal itself is at least twenty feet; and though the distance hollowed through the ground is so considerable, yet the light is perfectly admitted. This was the greatest obstacle to the completion of the junction of the two seas; and its execution has immortalized the famous Riquet, whom Louis the fourteenth employed in the enterprize. He was made Count de Caraman, and his descendants yet enjoy the title.

I arrived here last night. Beziers is an opulent and considerable city, containing above twenty thousand inhabitants, and situated in a delicious country. It covers all the sides of a very steep and lofty hill, on the highest point of which is built the cathedral. At the foot rolls the river Orbe. The prospect is extensive and beautiful, bounded to the north by mountains, and terminated on the south  
by

by the Mediterranean. It is accounted one of the most plentiful and eligible places of residence in the kingdom, all the necessaries and elegancies of the table being procurable, and at the most moderate prices.

Beziers is said to have been a "Statio Romana," and used by them as a place of arms. The siege was one of the most memorable and bloody which happened during the crusade against the Albigenses. The garrison defended it with determined bravery; and every other means being unequal to their reduction, it was resolved to storm it. The papal Nuncio, assisted by Gusman the Spaniard, better known under the name of St. Dominic, exhorted the troops to behave with courage in this pious enterprize, and promised them remission from all their past offences. After a long and obstinate struggle, the city was entered by the victorious soldiery, who massacred, in cold blood, sixty thousand of the wretched inhabitants, without distinction of sex, rank, or age, and afterwards



afterwards reduced it to ashes. I leave it to your own generous and feeling mind, to make the natural reflections on this horrid catastrophe. I fear to permit myself to comment on such an event, to which there are but too many similar in the history of the Romish church. The form of that religion is doubtless unhappy and destructive to the human race, which nourishes in its essence the seeds of theological controversy, and metaphysical subtilties; which, though contemptible in themselves, necessarily produce that spirit of intoleration and persecution, that uniform experience proves to be the certain consequence of a difference in opinion on sacred subjects. Happy the Romans and the Greeks, who established no crusades to convert the provinces they subdued! who massacred no people for their adherence to the superstition of their ancestors, who knew no points of scholastic or polemical divinity; but with open arms received the gods of the conquered nations, and admitted Isis, and  
the

the dog Anubis, to a place in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus!

Edward the Black Prince laid siege to Beziers in 1355, but without success. He ravaged all this part of Languedoc, and advanced even as far as Fabrigues, a little town at two leagues distant from Montpellier. There he halted; and whether from an apprehension of being intercepted in his retreat, or his army being fatiated with booty, began his march back. He burnt the suburbs of Narbonne and Carcassonne on his way, spread terror through all the neighbouring provinces, and brought his soldiers in triumph to Bourdeaux, laden with spoils.

The cathedral contains nothing remarkable, except the tomb of Blanche of France. Philip of Valois, her father, became enamoured, at the age of fifty-six, of Blanche d'Evreux, the most beautiful princess in Europe. She was only sixteen years old; but this disproportion did not prevent the nuptials. The King enjoyed his bride a very short time;

time; he died the ensuing year, of the same disease which proved fatal to Louis the twelfth, and to Don John, son to Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain. The queen was left with child, and lay in some months afterwards of the princess Blanche. When she had attained her twentieth year, she was betrothed to the Count of Barcelona, and died at this city, on her journey into Catalonia.

I leave Beziers this afternoon. Meanwhile, adieu !

Tarascon on the Rhone,  
 Tuesday, 21st November, 1775.

**M**ONTPELIER is a delicious place of residence. I staid there four days, and quitted it with extreme regret. The town itself is by no means handsome, the streets being almost all narrow, and badly laid out; but Nature seems to have chosen the hill on which it stands, to enrich with her choicest favours. The ascent is easy and gradual on every side; and the states of Languedoc have ornamented the summit of it at a vast expence, in a manner where taste and magnificence are equally blended.

The prospect from this happy spot I cannot describe, though I studied it every day with an enthusiastic pleasure. Raphael's pencil, or Lorraine's, might paint it, but even Shakespeare's colouring must do injustice to its beauties. The vales of Languedoc, covered with olives, or laid out in vineyards, are contrasted with rude



rocks to the north, and die away into the sea to the south. Though winter has almost stripped the trees of their verdure, there is nothing melancholy or desert which presents itself to the eye. A sky serene and unclouded, an invigorating sun, a keen and wholesome air, spread a gaiety over November itself, which here is neither accompanied with fogs nor rain. Montpellier has notwithstanding lost, within these thirty years, that vogue which conduces more to the support of a place, than any real advantages it may possess in point of salubrity; and the number of strangers who visit it from that motive is diminished annually. Some trade is still carried on by a small river, called the Les, which empties itself into the sea, about a league off; but the Mediterranean has been retiring these three centuries from the whole coast of Languedoc and Provence. Frejus, between Toulon and Antibes, where the Emperor Augustus laid up his galleys after the battle of Actium, is now an inland city.

You doubtless remember the celebrated interview of Charles the fifth and Francis the first at Aigues-mortes. It is at present half a league from the shore, and has, of consequence, lost all its ancient commerce, which was very extensive. This event, which took place early in the last century, induced the Cardinal de Richlieu, ever attentive to the grandeur and emolument of the state, to construct a port at Agde, which he effected. The remedy was only temporary, as the cause still subsisted; and before the year 1670 Agde was rendered almost useless. Colbert then undertook to build the town of Cette, at which place all the commodities brought down the royal canal might be exported, and the province of Languedoc supplied with a port, of which otherwise it is totally destitute. A gentleman here has assured me, that the necessity alone of having a maritime town at the mouth of the canal, has hitherto prevented Cette from sharing the fate of its predecessors, as the annual expence of clearing the  
harbour

harbour amounts to a hundred thousand livres; and even these precautions cannot hinder the sand from obstructing the entrance, and forming a bar across it, in a series of years. Montpellier owes its chief elevation to this very circumstance. The episcopal see was originally at Maguelonne, a place on the sea-shore; but which declining, from the retreat of the water, Pope Paul the third transferred it there, in 1536.

It is a garden from Montpellier to Nîmes, flat, and every where cultivated. The peasants are just beginning to gather their olives, which are amazingly numerous, and the trees planted with the same regularity as the orchards in England. I cannot but envy the inhabitants this genial climate, and these fertile plains, and am ready to accuse Nature of partiality in the infinite difference she has put between the Languedocian and the Swedish peasant. In vain will you tell me the “*Amor Patriæ*,” the attachment we bear to that country where we were born, renders them

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equally.

equally happy, and obliterates or extinguishes all other distinctions. I know the force of this principle; I feel it in my own bosom; I cultivate it with the greatest ardour—but it cannot blind me to the infinite superiority which certain regions of the earth are endowed with above the rest.

I spent three days at Nîmes in the survey of those magnificent and beautiful remains of the Roman greatness which yet subsist. They have been described a thousand times; and it is not my intention to trouble you with a repetition of them. The Amphitheatre, and the “*maison quarrée*,” are known through every kingdom of Europe. The first impresses with the deepest veneration; the latter excites the most elegant and refined delight. Indignation against the barbarians, who could violate and deface these glorious productions of antiquity, will mingle with the sensations of every beholder. One can scarce believe that Charles Martel, from hatred to the Ro-



man name, had the savage fury to fill the corridors of the amphitheatre with wood, to which he set fire, with the intention to injure, though it surpassed his power to demolish, so vast an edifice. Yet even in despite of these attempts of barbarous nations, of the lapse of so many ages, and inclemency of elements, its appearance at this time is the most august which can be presented to the mind. The prodigious circumference, the solidity and durability of its construction, the awful majesty of so vast a pile, half perfect, half in ruin, impress with a tumult of sentiments hard to be transfused by any description. The "*maison carrée*," is in far superior preservation. It appears to me to be the most perfect piece of architecture in the world. The order is the Corinthian, and all the laboured beauties of that style seem to be exhausted in its construction. I blush for the bigotry and mean superstition which has converted this superb temple into a chapel of the Virgin, decked out with

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crucifixes,

crucifixes, gilding, and Catholic pagantry.

At a quarter of a mile from the town of Nîmes, is another temple, far gone in a state of decay. Immemorial tradition declares that it was consecrated to Diana; but it is generally supposed to have been sacred to the "Dii infernales," as it is apparent that no light was admitted into it. In the inside, are numbers of mutilated statues, marbles, capitals, and inscriptions, which have been found from time to time. Close to it, rises a fountain, which may vie with that of Vaucluse in beauty, though not in fame. It is of a prodigious size, and never diminishes in the longest droughts. As the channel through which it flows had become obstructed in a series of ages by sand and gravel, the inhabitants of the city undertook some years ago to clean and renew it. In the course of this work, they discovered a number of Roman coins, rings, and other antiquities, several of which are highly preserved, and  
exceedingly

exceedingly rare. On the summit of the rock from whence issues the fountain, stands a building which has much exercised the opinions of the learned. It is Roman, and vulgarly called “La Tour magne.” Its exposed situation has peculiarly conduced to hasten its decay. At what time it was erected, or to what purposes it served, are now equally unknown.

Nîmes is an ill built and disagreeable place, containing in itself nothing extraordinary or remarkable. A hundred fables are related concerning its origin, which is carried into times anterior by many centuries to the Roman conquests. It probably does not occupy at present the fourth part of the ground on which it formerly stood. I left it at two o'clock this afternoon. The distance is only twenty miles; but the wind blew such a hurricane, as I scarce ever remember. The passage across the Rhone, which divides Provence from Languedoc at this place, is over a bridge of boats; and I own I passed it with some apprehensions,

as they assure me it is not uncommon for carriages to be carried over into the river by a violent gust of wind.

The view of the Rhone is very picturesque. On one side, in Languedoc, stands Beaucaire, a considerable town, with a ruined castle overhanging a rock: on this is situate Tarascon, with a correspondent castle, much more considerable, and washed by the waves. The river is far broader than the Thames at London.

To-morrow I proceed for Aix and Mar-seilles. Farewell!



Marseilles, 5th January, 1776.

I scarce ever remember in our northern climate, a colder day than that on which I continued my journey from Tarascon to this city. Winter seem'd to have taken possession of the face of nature before its time. The olive trees were covered with snow, which fell very fast, and the Bize which blew in my face, and came from the summit of the Alps, rendered the weather extremely severe.—At St. Remi, a little town only four leagues from Tarascon, I drove about a mile out of the road, to see the remains of Marius's trophies over the Cimbri and Teutones. Though so many ages have rolled on since their construction, they yet forcibly recall the idea of Rome, the conqueror of the earth.

It was night when I arrived at Aix, where I staid three days. The city has that air of silence and gloom so commonly characteristic of places devoid either of commerce or industry,

industry, and forms a most striking contrast to Marseilles, where opulence and population are universally visible. The warm springs which render it celebrated, induced Sextius Calvinus to found a Roman colony there, to which he gave the name of “Aquæ Sextiæ.” They were supposed, probably with reason, to possess particular virtues in cases of impotence or debility; and several altars have been dug up sacred to Priapus, the inscriptions on which indicate their gratitude to that Deity for his apprehended succour and assistance. I saw nothing in the cathedral deserving attention, except the tomb of Charles of Anjou, last of the great Angevin line, Kings of Naples, and Counts of Provence. He died, if I recollect right, in 1483, and left both his actual and pretended dominions to Louis the eleventh, king of France. The latter claims on the Neapolitan crown were the foundation of those long and unhappy wars begun by Charles the eighth, and perpetuated under his successor.

It

It is only twenty miles from Aix to this city.—There is notwithstanding, a considerable difference in the climate of Marfeilles, which is rendered milder in winter, and cooler during the heats of summer, from its vicinity to the Mediterranean. Nature seems eminently to have marked out the place for commerce, by the advantages she has bestowed on it. The entrance of the harbour, which is extremely narrow, and furrounded by lofty mountains, shelters and protects the vessels during the most violent storms. The port itself forms a delightful walk at this season of the year, as it is open to the southern sun, and crowded with an assemblage not only of all the European nations, but of Turks, Greeks, and natives of the coast of Barbary. The “*coup d’œil*” is one of the most agreeable to be imagined, if the chains of the galley slaves, heard among the hum of business, did not tincture it with the hateful idea of slavery. The gallies themselves useless and neglected, rot peaceably in their  
their

their respective stations; and it is said, that no others will ever be constructed, to supply their place, as they have long ceased to be of any utility to the state, and are scarcely navigable in severe weather.

In the short residence I have made here, I am yet forcibly struck with the wide difference, and almost absolute dissimilarity in the genius of the Provencaux, from that generally attributed to the French. The common people have a brutality and rudeness of manners more characteristic of a republican, than a monarchical and absolute government. Their language, so famous in ancient romance, is a corrupt Italian, more intelligible to a Neapolitan than a Parisian. The women are lively, beautiful, and disposed from complexion to gallantry. A fire, an extreme vivacity unknown to all the northern nations, and which results from a penetrating air, a genial sun, and skies for ever blue, is eminently discernible in their eyes, their conversation, the peculiar dances and music of the country, in all  
which



which a warm and impassioned animation forms the predominant quality. I fear to express how many charms there are in this gaiety of character and disposition, lest you should think I mean to contrast it with the etiquette of our own kingdom, where we seldom allow the heart to act uninfluenced by the judgment, or banish reflection and philosophy from the scene of elegant dissipation.

Marseilles pretends to remote antiquity. A colony of Phocians, in ages unknown, is said to have given it birth. The old city is one of the most nasty and ill built in Europe. I have never had courage enough to penetrate into its recesses, which are insupportably filthy. The modern Marseilles has sprung up since the commencement of the eighteenth century, and has all that regularity, elegance, and convenience, which distinguish the present times. I am inclined to consider it as one of the most eligible places of winter residence in the world, and far superior, where health is not an object of attention,

to Nice or Montpelier. In the carnival, I am assured, it is uncommonly gay. The surrounding country is rocky and barren, but covered for several miles, on all sides, with villas and summer houses, which commerce has erected.

My intention of visiting Corfica and Sardinia I have relinquished, on account of the barbarism in which both those islands are plunged, and the few objects of entertainment or information they offer to a liberal mind. I have determined to remain here till the ensuing spring, when I shall probably return through the inland Provinces to England. Meanwhile, I remain, &c.

Clermont,

Clermont in Auvergne,

Friday, 26th of April, 1776.

**A**FTER a silence of near four months, I again resume my pen from among the mountains of Auvergne, at the distance of more than a hundred leagues from Marseilles. I have exchanged the delicious climate of Provence, its warm sun, and the shore of the Mediterranean, for a very different scene.

I quitted Marseilles on the sixth of this month, and got to Avignon the evening of the ensuing day. It was impossible not to dedicate some time to the view of a city so renowned in past ages, the seat of the sovereign Pontiffs during more than half a century, the residence of a Petrarch, and the birth-place of Laura. I felt that pleasure which results to every reflective mind, from the consciousness of being on the spot immortaliz'd by poetry, or genius, or great achievements. I compared Avignon as it now exists, with the picture

ture which Petrarch has drawn of it in his writings, and attempted to ascertain the situation of his mistress's abode, which tradition yet points out in one of the suburbs. I went to the church of the Cordeliers, where rest her remains. In a little dark chapel on the right hand, now disused for religious ceremonies, damp, cold, and unwholsome, beneath the arch which forms the entrance, and under a plain stone, lies that Laura, once so beautiful, and who can never die while her lover's fame and productions survive. Round the stone are some ancient Gothic characters covered with dirt, and rendered illegible by time. You will perhaps recollect that Francis the first, the most accomplished prince who ever reigned in France, and who eminently possess'd that enthusiasm which usually distinguishes and characterises genius, caused the tomb to be opened in his own presence. His wish to pierce the obscurity in which Petrarch has affected to involve the name of his mistress, and his own unhappy passion :  
a desire



a desire to ascertain by some incontestable mark the burial-place of Laura, were the motives which influenced him. Some small human bones, supposed to be her's, and a leaden box containing a scrawl of Italian verses, obscurely disclosing Petrarch's attachment to her, were all which repaid the monarch's curiosity. I doubt not it is needless to remind you, that Laura died of the plague, which desolated all Europe in 1347 and the following year, and of which Boccace has drawn the most animated, terrifying, and distressful picture which can be held up to the imagination of man.

It seems impossible to recognize the situation, or adjacent country of Avignon, as they exist at present, in the melancholy colours with which Petrarch has shaded them. The fertile plain of the "Comtat Venaissin" in which it stands, the rich banks of the Rhone are described by him as a frightful desert, through which pours a river infested by continual wind and tempests. Ovid has given us the same

horrible idea of the coast of the Black Sea, a climate incontestably one of the finest on the earth, and blessed with an almost continual spring. The gloomy medium through which the two poets beheld every object, explains this extraordinary enigma. The latter, only occupied with the painful recollection of the luxurious pleasures which reigned in the court of Augustus, and from which he was for ever banished, was dead to every sense of joy or delight. Petrarch, an exile from his native country, ever cherishing the fond idea of revisiting Florence, and despising the manners, while he detested the city of Avignon, knew no bounds to his exclamations and complaints. Neither the distinguished favour of several succeeding popes, with which he was honour'd, nor the consideration of its being the spot which gave his mistress birth, could soften or diminish the acrimony of his hatred to it. — For me, who viewed it impartially, and divested of prejudice, I was charmed with the situation. The view from the summit of the rock in  
the

the center of the city is delicious. The Bize indeed incommoded me extremely; but I comforted myself, that tho' piercing, it was yet wholesome; and that if Louis the eleventh, in a state of debility, had ordered intercessions to Heaven to avert it, Augustus, on the other hand, was so well convinced of its salubrious and invigorating qualities, that he erected an altar to it, and ordered it to be placed among the Gods.

The Rhone itself is a noble object, rolling rapidly through meadows covered with olive trees, and divided into two channels opposite to Avignon. Across it extend the ruinous and decayed arches of that bridge, against which Madame de Grignan was so near being lost, and of which Madame de Sevigné makes frightful mention. It was demolished in 1699, by one of the inundations common to the Rhone. When entire, it was not less than a quarter of a mile in length; but its extreme narrowness, which did not permit two carriages to pass in any part,

had almost rendered it previously useless ; and motives of policy prevent the erection of a new one, as Avignon still belongs to the papal see.—On the farther side, in Languedoc stands Ville Neuve, a considerable town, with a magnificent monastery of Benedictins, on a rock correspondent to that where is built the cathedral of Avignon. The high mountain of Ventoux en Dauphiné, covered with snow, and which Petrarch has described, appears to the north, and the savage rocks of Vaucluse bound the view to the eastward, at the distance of fifteen miles. Beneath spreads a lovely vale, water'd by several rivulets which lose themselves in the Rhone, and cultivated with the most laborious industry.

The city itself is in general ill built, irregular, and devoid of beauty ; but the Gothic walls and ramparts with which it has been surrounded by different pontiffs, remain in high preservation. I recollect none so perfect in any part of France. Several popes and antipopes re-  
pose



pose in the churches of the place ; and in that of the Cordeliers, almost opposite to Laura's, is the tomb of Grillon, so well known for his gallant and invincible courage, for his loyal and unshaken attachment to Henry the fourth.

You will not doubt that I visited the fountain of Vaucluse, immortaliz'd by Petrarch, and to which he so often retired to indulge his grief and hopeless love. I did so ; nor is the lively impression it made on my imagination in any degree erased. It is only five leagues distant from Avignon, and as I set out early in the morning, I reached the entrance of the valley about ten o'clock. I got out of the carriage, and walked slowly along the banks of the Sorgue, for so the river is called, formed by the fountain. Meadows of the most vivid green cover either side of it, over which rise abrupt and lofty rocks, which seem designed to seclude it from human view. The valley becomes more and more narrow toward the extremity, and winding continually, describes the figure of a

horse-shoe. The view is at length terminated by an enormous mass of rock, forming a barrier across it, of a prodigious height, and absolutely perpendicular. Through its vast recesses run the streams which supply the fountain; and at its foot appears a basin of water, several hundred feet in circumference, stretched like a sheet, silent and quiet. The sides descend with great rapidity, and it is said that in the middle no bottom is discoverable, though it has been often attempted—a circumstance probably resulting from the violence with which the springs bubble up, which prevent any weight let down into it from descending beyond a certain depth,—Tho' clearer in itself than chrystal, yet the incumbent rock casts a continual shade, approaching to black, over its surface. The water escaping from this state of inaction by a narrow passage, is immediately precipitated in a cascade down a rocky channel, where it foams over a number of vast, detached stones, which intercept and impede its progress. They  
are

are covered with a deep green moss of many ages, and have probably tumbled from the mountains which overhang the torrent. The rocks themselves, which surround and invest this romantic spot, are worn by time, and the inclemency of elements, into a thousand extraordinary forms, to which fancy attaches shape and figure. On one of the pointed extremities, in a situation which appears almost inaccessible, are beheld the remains of an ancient castle, projecting over the water. It completes the wondrous scene, and leaves scarce any picturesque object wanting, which could have been presented to the view. The peasants call it “*Il castello di Petrarca* ;” and add, with infinite simplicity, that Laura lived on the opposite side of the river, under the bed of which was a subterranean passage, by which the two lovers visited each other. Nothing is however more certain, than that these ruins are those of the Chateau belonging to the lords or Seigneurs of Avignon. The bishop of Cavaillon, in the

frequent visits which he used to make to Petrarch, resided there.—The poet's dwelling was much lower down, nearer to the margin of the Sorgue, as evidently appears from his minute description of it, and his quarrel with the Naiads of the stream, who encroached during the winter on his little adjoining territory. No vestiges of it are now discernible.

I sat me down on the verge of the bason, to consider the scene around, and the romantic assemblage of objects which presented themselves on every side. I regarded with a mixt sensation of pleasure and of pain, the valley and the fountain which had been witnesses to Petrarch's complaints, and hopeless passion. I attempted to discern the cavern, which, during the summer, when the waters of Vaucluse are low, admits into the bowels of the rock, and where he used to enter alone in the dead of night to indulge his despair in that frightful seclusion. While I was engaged in these reflections, the day darkened in, and a sudden storm  
of



of rain, from which I was completely sheltered by the incumbent mountain, issuing from a collection of black clouds overhanging the spot, spread through the whole landscape a majestic and awful sublimity. When it was past, I retir'd, tho' with slow and reluctant steps, from this lovely and celebrated solitude.

Before I got into my carriage, the peasant who had conducted me to the fountain, carried me to a house situated in the valley, where are still preserved two portraits of the lovers, who have conduced to render Vaucluse immortal. My whole attention was directed to that of Laura. She appears in the earliest bloom of youth, such as she is described by Petrarch on that morning when he first beheld her. A certain air of playful gaiety seems spread over her countenance. Her eyes are large and of a deep hazel, the nose justly proportioned, and the contour of her face a faultless oval. Her hair is confined by a fillet, braided and adorned with pearls; its colour approaches to yellow. Over her

her neck is a faint shade of gauze; her robe is of a pale red, and her arms are covered with a sort of glove which descends half way the hands. In one of them, she holds an amaranth, emblematic of immortality. — Petrarch is depictur'd as in middle life, of an engaging figure, and his brows bound with laurel.

I return'd to Avignon in the evening, and quitted it on the morning of the ensuing day. At Orange where I breakfasted, it was impossible not to dedicate an hour to the remains of the Roman theatre, and the triumphal arch of Marius; edifices the most august and magnificent, although deformed by the lapse of near two thousand years, and of which I should perhaps give you a description, if it had not already been done by preceding travellers. — I continued my journey along the eastern bank of the Rhone. On the other side appear the high mountains of the Vivarais covered with snow, and to the right are those of Dauphiné extending to the Alps, with which they mingle. As I advanced  
10 north,

north, the climate became more rude and piercing; the Bize blew with a redoubled keenness, and chilled the spring just opening. I arrived at Lyons after three days journey. My road from thence to this city, lay through the provinces of Beaujolois and Forez; the first of these, though hilly, is finely cultivated. Between Lyons and Roanne I passed the high mountain of Tarare, so dreaded in the last century. From the summit is a prodigious prospect, only bounded towards Savoy by the Alps, which form a vast barrier covered with eternal snow. At Roanne I enter'd the Forez, a small province barren, uncultivated, and thinly inhabited. A chain of lofty hills, or rather mountains, extends across it; thick forests of pine and fir cover the steep acclivities, and afford refuge to wolves and boars, which are found in great numbers. Scarce a hamlet is seen in several miles; and the silence, the depopulation, and romantic solitudes through which I pass'd, strongly reminded me of Sweden or Finland,

I arrived

I arrived at Thiers Wednesday evening. It is a considerable town situated on the rapid descent of a mountain, from whence is beheld a most delicious landscape. The country extends for many leagues, on all sides, in a cultivated plain, terminated by another range of mountains. Clermont is distinctly seen at the distance of five-and-twenty miles. This rich track of the Auvergne is denominated "La Li-magne." It is a basin surrounded by rocks and hills. The soil is uncommonly exuberant, and inferior to no part of France. Several fine streams water it, and add to the beauty of the scene.

I got to this city yesterday. The situation is agreeable, on a little eminence, to which the access is gradual and easy. The place itself seems to have been built in an age the most barbarous. The streets are so narrow and winding, that no carriage can enter them, and the buildings correspond to the other parts; but to compensate for this inconvenience, the suburbs are charming, and the houses modern



dern and elegant. I visited this morning, the petrifying spring, which Charles the ninth is said to have surveyed with so much wonder and pleasure. It is only a quarter of a mile from the town. In a course of ages, it has formed a ridge of stone or incrustation, not less than sixteen feet in height, above a hundred feet long, and in some parts near ten in thickness. As it impeded, and at length totally stopped the current of a little rivulet which intersected its course, the inhabitants were obliged to dig a passage through it. The stream is now directed into another channel, and has begun to form a new bridge across the rivulet into which it falls.

My intention was to have penetrated farther into this romantic province, but the season is as yet too early, to permit of ascending any of the highest mountains. I should however certainly have gone to Usson, which is only ten leagues distant, if any remains of the castle still existed. I need not remind you, that Margaret of  
Valois,

Valois, wife to Henry the fourth, was shut up in it during twenty years. A gentleman who resides at Issoire near the spot, gave me this description of it.

“ The castle of Usson stood upon a rock  
“ almost inaccessible, at the foot of which  
“ flowed a little river. The queen, by a  
“ masterly piece of address, expelled the  
“ Marquis de Canillac, and rendered her-  
“ self mistress of the place. It has been  
“ demolished by time, and the avidity  
“ of the neighbouring peasants, who have  
“ removed almost all the stones which  
“ composed the castle. Some ruins yet  
“ remain in the last stage of decay, which  
“ the vulgar apprehend to have been  
“ formerly sacred to religious purposes,  
“ and which they denominate, ‘ Les  
“ Chapelles de la Reine Marguerite.’ It  
“ is true they were erected by the Queen ;  
“ but she had dedicated them to plea-  
“ sure, not devotion, and gave ren-  
“ dezvous in these apartments to the  
“ neighbouring nobility of Auvergne.

“ No

"No other traces remain at this time of  
"Usson."

My letter is already of an immoderate  
length ; I shall only add to it, that I  
am yours, &c.

Bourges in Berri, 6th of May, 1776.

**I** Left Clermont sooner than I had intended, in compliance with an invitation which I could not refuse, to spend some time at the Chateau de P—— belonging to the Count de L——. The house is situated in an unfrequented part of Auvergne, towards the confines of the Bourbonnois, on a rising ground, which commands an enchanting prospect. Through the plain beneath, flows the river Allier, mentioned in terms of such lively admiration by Madame de Sevigné, and on whose banks, she says, might yet be discovered some of the shepherds of fiction and romance. Monsieur de L—— was not at home, and I was received by the Countess in a manner the most noble and polite. She did me the honour to detain me five days, which I spent in such a manner, as never to be erased from my remembrance. I could describe to you  
her



her person, but that I shall give you a more just idea of it in saying it strikingly resembled the portrait of the duchess of Mazarin, as drawn by the Abbé de St. Real. Her other accomplishments were not inferior to her beauty; and when she danced the Bourrée, a dance peculiar to Auvergne, I thought Hortensia Mancini was not comparable to Madame de L——. I took my leave with that reluctance natural to a person impressed with pleasure and respect.

At Montpensier, I alighted to view the mount, on which formerly stood the castle, now totally demolished. It is rendered famous in history by the death of Louis the eighth, king of France, and father of St. Louis. He expired there, in 1226, on his return from the siege of Avignon, and as was supposed, of poison, administered to him by the Count de Champagne.

I arrived the ensuing day at Moulins. It stands in a fine plain, close to the river Allier, along the sides of which

are planted walks of elm, poplar and aspin. The city, though capital of the province of Bourbonnois, is mean and ill built. I hurried away to look at the Mausoleum of Henry Duke of Montmorenci, in the church of the nunnery of the Visitation. It was erected to his memory by the Duchess Marie Felice des Ursins. I regarded this superb monument with sensations of the deepest pity for the unfortunate hero to whom it was raised. Castelnaudari, and Leytoure, and Toulouse crowded into my mind.—The tomb is composed of the most beautiful and costly marbles. The Duke appears in a reposing attitude, his left arm supported on his helmet. By him sits his widow, her eyes directed to heaven, her hands clasped, and through her whole figure an expression of disconsolate sorrow strongly marked.

It is a delightful ride from Moulins to Nevers, through the Bourbonnois and Nivernois. In the center of the city, on the summit of a hill, is built the palace  
of

of the ancient Dukes of Nevers. It appears to be a production of the sixteenth century, and, though beginning to exhibit marks of decay, is yet a model of beauty and delicacy in Gothic architecture. The apartments are hung with tapestry of two hundred years, and through them is spread an air of grotesque and rude magnificence. I was detained in one of the chambers during some minutes, by a portrait of Madame de Montespan. She appears rising from a superb couch, the curtains of which are drawn back, and supported by Cupids. Her attitude is half voluptuous, half reflective. She is wrapped in a negligent *deshabille*. Her hair floats down over her shoulders and neck in wanton ringlets. She rests her head on her left hand. One of her feet is concealed by her robe; but the other, which is naked to the mid-leg, and on which the painter, with wondrous taste, has exhausted all his art, is placed on an embroidered cushion. Her slippers are

thrown carelessly by. I was charmed with the piece.

I passed the Loire at La Charité, when I entered the province of Berri; the distance from thence to this city is about twelve leagues. The country is much inferior in beauty and cultivation to that between Moulins and Nevers. Thick woods or barren heaths destitute of inhabitants, constitute the far greater part. Bourges is situated in the midst of a plain, open and level as the sea. It is of a very considerable size, and of high antiquity. Most of the houses forcibly evince this latter claim by the barbarism of their construction, which marks an age of extreme rudeness and unacquaintance with the arts. I have seen scarce an edifice which does not appear to have stood many hundred years.—The “Hotel de “Ville” was built by the celebrated Jacques Cœur, well known in the French history by his greatness, his exile, and misfortunes. Over the portal, is a fine statue



statue of Charles the seventh, clad in complete armour, and mounted on horse-back. That prince usually held his court here; and you will certainly recollect, that during the extreme distress in which his affairs were involved at the commencement of his reign, the English, elated with their victories under Henry the fifth, bestowed on him the contemptuous appellation of “*Le petit Roi de Bourges*,” from the loyal and constant attachment which the citizens bore him.

The tower, denominated “*La grosse tour*,” in which Louis the twelfth was detained a prisoner more than two years, by the Lady of Beaujeu, exists no longer. It was demolished in 1651, by order of Cardinal Mazarin, during the minority of Louis the fourteenth, and a modern building has been constructed on the spot, of the stones which composed it.

I went to look at the tomb of Jane of Valois, daughter to Louis the eleventh, and wife to Louis the twelfth, whom he repudiated to marry Anne of Bretagne, on

his accession to the crown. She retired to this city, and having dedicated her remaining days to piety, expired in the nunnery of St. Jane, which she had founded. One of the nuns shewed me, through the grating, her slippers and nuptial robes, which are preserved with great care; and she added, that innumerable miracles had been wrought by her intercession and relics.

The cathedral is a most august and magnificent edifice, though the external part of the building does not correspond in beauty or symmetry to that within. It is of prodigious dimensions, far exceeding any we have in England, and the quantity of painted glass is scarce inferior to that of Gouda in Holland. John duke of Berri, brother to Charles the fifth king of France, reposes in the subterranean chapel beneath a marble tomb of costly workmanship. He is known in history under the unhappy reign of Charles the sixth, when the frenzy with which that prince

prince was seized left a full career to the intrigues and ambition of his uncles.

Scarce any other objects present themselves to the eye in this city except ruins, and I am almost afraid as I walk thro' the narrow winding streets, lest the buildings should fall upon my head. If Charles the seventh could revive, I am persuaded he would perfectly recognize the place, which appears to have undergone very little alteration, or received any embellishment, in more than three centuries which have elapsed since his death.

Louis the eleventh was born at Bourges, and in the "Hotel de Ville" is a painting figurative of this event. France, under figurative of a woman, appears rising from her throne to receive the medallion of that monarch, which is presented to her by the Genius of Berri.

This province, though large and naturally fertile, is little cultivated or improved. This chiefly results from the want of a navigable river, by which the grain

and other productions might be transported to different quarters of the kingdom.

Tomorrow morning I leave Bourges, From Orleans or Blois you may expect to hear of Yours, &c.



Blois, Tuesday, 14th May, 1776,

**I** Staid some hours at Mehun-sur-Yeure in Berri, to contemplate the magnificent remains of the castle. It is only four leagues distant from Bourges, and is rendered famous in history by the death of Charles the seventh who constructed it, and who expired there by a voluntary abstinence from food, in the terror of being poison'd by his own son. The situation is not favour'd by nature, and corresponds ill to the grandeur of the structure. It stands in a wide-extended plain, sheltered by deep woods. At its foot flows the little river Yeure, which dividing at the spot into several streams, forms a number of marshy islands covered with willows. Though the castle has been consumed by lightning, and injured by the lapse of time, superadded to the depredations of the neighbouring peasants, yet its ruins are even now inexpressibly august and beautiful. I visited every part of it which

was accessible. The great tower is in high preservation, and three of the apartments which appear to have been rooms of state might almost be inhabited. The chamber where as tradition says, the unhappy prince breathed his last, is in one of the smaller towers, all entrance into which is obstructed by the stones which have fallen from above. The whole edifice is composed of a stone nearly equal to marble in whiteness and durability. An enormous fossé surrounds it. In the center is the chapel, the workmanship and delicacy of which excite astonishment. It appears to me to be one of the finest monuments now existing, of the taste and style of architecture in the fifteenth century, when the arts began slowly to awake from their slumber of so many ages.

Charles the seventh is depictur'd by the French historians under much the same colours as Pope in his Iliad has drawn the portrait of Paris. Naturally brave, munificent, amiable, protecting and cultivating all the elegant occupations of a liberal

beral mind ; but sinking continually into an enervate weakness, and sacrificing every grand or patriotic sentiment to the seductive enchantment of female beauty.—

The castle of Mehun appears never to have been the favourite residence of any succeeding king. It was neglected by Charles's immediate successors, lost in the superior lustre of Fontainbleau and Chambord under Francis the first, and ultimately sold by Louis the fourteenth, to support his ruinous and expensive wars in the last century.

I pursued my journey through the Berri and Sologne to Orleans, where I arrived the ensuing day. The entrance is noble and striking from the south, over a fine bridge across the Loire of nine arches. The city itself is in general very meanly built, and the streets narrow to an excess, one only excepted which conducts from the bridge, and is composed of modern, elegant buildings. In this stands the celebrated monument, where Charles the seventh and the Maid of Orleans are represented

represented kneeling before the body of Jesus, extended on the Virgin's lap. It was erected by order of that monarch in 1458, to perpetuate his victories and triumph over the English. All the figures are in iron. The King appears bare-headed, and by him lies his helmet surmounted with a crown. Opposite to him is the Maid uncovered, and in the same attitude of grateful devotion to Heaven. It is a most precious and invaluable remain of antiquity.

In the "Hotel de Ville" is a portrait of the same extraordinary and immortal woman, which I studied long and attentively. It was done in 1581, and is the oldest original extant. The painter seems to have drawn a flattering resemblance, and to have decorated her with imaginary charms. Her face though long, is of exceeding beauty, heighten'd by an expression of intelligence and grandeur rarely united. Her hair falls loosely down her back. She wears a sort of bonnet, enriched



enriched with pearls and shaded with white plumes, tied under her chin with a fillet. About her neck is a little band, and lower down on her bosom, a necklace composed of small links. Her habit, which is a woman's, I find difficult exactly to describe. It fits close to the body, and is cut or flared at the arms and elbows. Round her waist is an embroidered girdle, and in her right hand she wields the sword, with which she expelled the enemies of her country. I am not surpriz'd at the animated and enthusiastic attachment which the French still cherish for her memory. The critical and desperate emergency in which she appeared; the phænomenon of her sex, youth, and previous obscurity; the unparallel'd success which crowned her enterprize; the cruel and detestable sentence by which she expired; the air of the marvellous spread over the whole narration, encreased and strengthened by that veneration which time affixes to every great event—all these united causes conspire to place her  
above

above mortality. Rome and Athens would have ranked her among the tutelary deities, and have erected temples to her worship; nor can I help being amazed, that amid the infinity of modern saints who croud and disgrace their churches, no altar has yet been placed to the Maid of Orleans.

The environs of Orleans, more especially in Sologne on the southern side of the Loire, are very agreeable. It is in general a level country cover'd with corn and vines. I rode out during my stay there to "La Source." The villa is rendered celebrated by the abode of Lord Bolingbroke, who passed the chief part of his exile in this retreat. Near the house in a bottom, is the spring from which its name is derived. It may be regarded as a most extraordinary phenomenon. The water rises out of the earth from a narrow aperture in a prodigious column, and forms immediately a beautiful and considerable river called the Loiret, which winds its course about two leagues, and is  
then

then lost in the Loire. Monsieur B—— to whom the place now belongs, has deform'd and totally disfigur'd this charming fountain, by an ill-judged and mistaken taste. Instead of a dark and gloomy hollow shaded by deep woods, and adapted to the horror of the scene, in the midst of which formerly rose the column, the opening has been enlarged, and it now only appears to bubble up scarce above the surface of the earth, in the middle of a shallow artificial bason. No trees or umbrage of any kind conceal or shelter it, and after passing through a narrow channel, it is dispersed in form of a looking-glass before the house. It is impossible to view so ridiculous and absurd a metamorphosis, without the greatest regret.

I left Orleans Sunday morning, and arrived here the same evening. A curiosity to visit the tomb of Louis the eleventh, who is interred at "Notre Dame de Clery," induced me to take that road though less direct. I passed the  
bridge

bridge of St. Mesmin with Brantome in my hand, and attempted, from his minute and exact description, to ascertain the spot where Francis duke of Guise was killed by Meré Poltrot.

The church of Clery was built by Louis the eleventh, who had always a singular and capricious devotion for the Virgin, to whom it is dedicated. He always denominated her "Ma bonne notre Dame de Clery." From a similar principle he ordered his body to be interred there, in a mausoleum which he had himself erected. The Hugonots during the civil wars violated the tomb, and threw the bones about the church with savage ferocity. Louis the thirteenth caused a new monument to be raised in 1622. It is of white marble and well executed. The king is in an attitude of prayer, his hands raised to heaven. His queen Charlotte of Savoy, was originally buried in the same tomb, and Charles the eighth caused his heart to be deposited there near his father.

I crossed



I crossed the Loire again at Beaugency, and spent the whole afternoon in the gardens and groves of Menars. This was the seat of the celebrated Madame de Pompadour, who began to beautify the place, and bequeathed it at her death to the Marquis de Marigny her only brother. The situation, on a high range of hills overhanging the Loire, is of unparallel'd beauty; and the eye is continually regaled on every side with a prospect the most extensive, delicious and cultivated. Towns and palaces and castles, intermixed with forests, hamlets, abbeys and vineyards, are spread below. A noble river pouring through the vale, diffuses plenty and fertility in its progress. The gardens themselves are laid out with great elegance, and adorned with a number of statues, chiefly presented to the Marquis by his late Majesty. A Pasiphaë lamenting Phaeton, and beginning to take root, detained me some minutes; but this figure was effaced by an Atlas, than

which nothing can be more perfect. The statue is of more than human proportions. He is in the act of attempting to tear himself from the rock into which he is about to be transformed, and all his muscles are in the most violent state of exertion. The sculptor has found means to give a sort of suction to the stone, which appears to draw in his members, and in some parts to have taken possession of them. It is a masterpiece of workmanship.—

Monsieur de Marigny has prodigiously improved the place since the Marchioness of Pompadour's death. The terrace does not yield to that of Windsor or St. Germain; and the woods, through which winds a murmuring rivulet, are of the most lonely and secluded solitude. In the midst of them, concealed under a thick umbrage appears a Cupid. He seems as just alighted on a pedestal covered with roses. Nothing can exceed the archness of his regard. It makes  
one

one tremble—but he has his finger on his lips.

To-morrow you shall hear more. I am fatigued, but it is the fatigue of pleasure. Ever yours.

Blois, Wednesday, 15th May, 1776.

**I**T is impossible for the coldest bosom not to feel some emotions of pleasure, at the view of a place so renowned in the page of history, as the city from whence I write. Judge then what I feel, who cannot behold the spot where any great atchievement has been performed in ages past, without the liveliest enthusiasm! Imagine the sensations with which I look upon the castle, where Louis the twelfth, the father of his people was born; in which were solemnised the nuptials of Margaret, sister of Francis the first, and of the second Margaret of Valois, wife of Henry the fourth! where Isabella of Bavaria, Queen of France, and Mary of Medicis were imprisoned! within whose walls the Duke and Cardinal of Guise were sacrificed to the vengeance of Henry the third! where Valentina of Milan, where Anne of Bretagne, where Claude her daughter, and Catherine of Medicis

so



so renowned for her genius and her crimes, expired!—I tread with reverence over the ground, render'd in some degree sacred, and view with a solemn delight the towers once inhabited by Queens and Monarchs, now tending to decay, or covered with ivy which spreads a twilight through the apartments at noon-day. An air of melancholy splendour and departed greatness is strongly spread through the whole, and encreased by the silence which reigns universally. The cyphers and devices of succeeding princes are faintly discerned on the front of the edifice, or over the portals. I distinguish the Porcupine of Louis the twelfth, the Salamander of Francis, and the amorous Moon of his son Henry. I trace the remains of the gallery constructed by Henry the fourth, and enter the walk of elms planted by Catherine of Medicis; or survey with regret the superb and unfinished palace of Gaston duke of Orleans.—You must pardon these unconnected exclamations, which have escaped me in spite of

B b 3

myself.

myself. I will now endeavour to give you some more methodical and intelligible description of the castle.

It stands on a rock immediately above the Loire, and commanding a view hardly, if at all inferior to that of Menars. The ancient Counts of Blois held their constant residence here, and erected the first Chateau, of which no remains now subsist, except one large round tower. Guy, last Count of the house of Chatillon, sold it to Louis Duke of Orleans brother to Charles the sixth, and who was afterwards murdered in the “ Rue Bar-  
“ bette” at Paris. It descended from him to Louis the twelfth his grandson. The eastern and southern sides as they now subsist, are of his construction. Over the grand gateway is an equestrian statue of the King himself, habited in a coat of mail. The style of architecture merits attention. Some of the figures which support the windows, are of a nature so incredibly indecent, of a lasciviousness so studied and grotesque, that one is surpris’d,

pris'd in a pious century, how a prince such as Louis the twelfth is depictur'd, or a Queen of manners so rigid and reserved as Anne of Bretagne, could permit them to be placed in the most conspicuous part of a royal palace. It is a striking demonstration of the gross manners and unpolished barbarism of the age.

The northern front of the castle was built by Francis the first, soon after his accession to the throne. A more splendid style, a more costly workmanship approaching in delicacy and elegance to the Roman edifices, discriminate it from the former, and we evidently trace the improvement of an age more refined and liberal. The apartments are all noble, spacious and kingly. I was shewn the celebrated chamber in which Henry Duke of Guise was assassinated. The stone tinged with his blood, has been almost scraped away by the devotion or curiosity of different persons. At the western extremity of the building is the tower of Chateau-Regnaud, famous for

the murder of the Cardinal of Guise. I went into the dungeon where he passed the night previous to his execution, with the Archbishop of Lyons. Two doors of massy iron admit into a gloomy chamber vaulted, and only lighted by one small window closed with a grate. The figure of the room is irregular. I measured it by my steps. It is twenty feet in diameter. In the center is a round hole big enough to receive the body of a man, and under it are three ranges of subterranean dungeons, one beneath the other. The Cardinal was put to death in a sort of recess hollowed in the wall resembling a chimney, on the day following that of his brother the Duke. The guards executed their order with halberds.—They perished the just martyrs of an inordinate ambition; and this is almost the only murder mentioned in history, for which the circumstances seem to plead a full exculpation.

At the eastern end of the northern front is the “Salle des Etats,” where Henry  
the



the third assembled the states twice during his reign. It is a vast hall now disused and ruinous. In the chimney, the bodies of the Duke and Cardinal of Guise are said to have been consumed to ashes. You will perhaps recollect the animated apostrophe of their mother to the statue of Louis the twelfth, on receiving the news of her children's death. She was daughter to Reneè de Ferrara, and grand-daughter to that monarch. Henry the third sent her a captive to Amboise, after the execution of her sons. Having embarked on the Loire, she turned towards the castle, and invoking with lifted arms the shade of her great ancestor, "Ah! grand  
 " Roi," exclaimed she, " avez vous fait  
 " batir ce Chateau, pour y faire mourir  
 " les enfans de votre petite fille?"

The western face is the work of Gaston Duke of Orleans, son of Henry the fourth, and brother to Louis the thirteenth. It is a beautiful and princely edifice, but unhappily left incomplete by his death. Mansard was the architect, and more than

than three hundred thousand livres were uselessly expended on this sumptuous building, which is uninhabitable and already far gone in decay. Gaston prognosticated before his decease the future state of ruin in which it would be left, and exclaimed as he lay expiring, by a prophetic anticipation, "*Domus mea, domus desolationis in eternum!*" All the other designs and plans of alteration he had begun were buried with him.

The gardens of the castle which were formerly very extensive, are now converted into private property. The superb gallery erected by Henry the fourth to divide the upper and lower ones, is only to be traced in its remains, as it was demolished about thirteen years ago by order of the court. Catherine of Medicis's walk is however undestroyed. It is of a prodigious length, extending to the forest of Blois, and formed an avenue to the palace truly royal.

I went yesterday to Chambord, the famous palace of Francis the first. It is about four leagues from hence, on the  
southern

southern side of the Loire. In a level situation embosomed in woods stands this fabric which has all the appearance of one of Tasso's or Ariosto's enchanted castles, raised out of the earth by subtle magic. The enormous magnitude of the whole structure crowned with turrets, pinnacles, domes, and towers innumerable, over which the lapse of two centuries begins to throw an air of decay and waning splendour, produce an effect on the beholder not to be communicated by description. Thick forests invest it round on all sides, and in front flows or rather stagnates a little river called the Cousson, black and full of sedges. The palace, conformable to the taste of the century in which it was built is moated round; but the architecture though strictly Gothic, is full of beauty and breathes no air of barbarism. A grand stair-case in the center conducts to the different ranges of apartments. By a singular contrivance it is render'd double, and two persons go up or down at the same

same time without seeing each other. I cannot pretend to explain, or give you an exact idea of this enigma in building, but it is curious and unique in its kind.

The chambers though now unfurnished and beginning to feel the ravages of time, are still regal and magnificent. Those occupied by the late Marechal Saxe are not totally destitute of furniture, and have been in some degree modernized. In many of them are buttresses or beams stretched across, to support the roof; they exceedingly deform the appearance of the rooms. Catherine of Medicis who had been informed by an astrologer, that she was in danger of being crushed under the ruins of a house, caused them to be placed from the terror of this prediction.

I enquired much after the pane of glass, on which were seen the two lines written by the hand of Francis the first with a diamond. They were in a little cabinet communicating with the chapel, but are now lost by some accident. They were these ;

“Toute



“Toute Femme varie.

“Mal habil qui s’y fie l”—

Some chagrin, caused by his mistress’s change or inconstancy probably gave rise to the sarcasm on the sex.

Inimense sums of money were expended in the erection of Chambord, and eighteen hundred workmen employed during twelve years to complete it. There are said to be twelve hundred large, and four hundred smaller apartments or cabinets in the palace. Francis entertained the Emperor Charles the fifth there, with his accustomed munificence and splendour, during the visit which he paid him on the rebellion of the Gantois in 1540. Henry the second made some additions and embellishments to it. His father’s device, a Salamander in the flames is seen in almost every part; and on a small tower are those of Henry himself, a Moon in form of a crescent and the letter H.

After having spent more than three hours in the different galleries or apartments, I sat down on the bank of the rivulet in

front of the edifice, to contemplate it at leisure. I spread my cold provisions on the grass, under the shade of two ancient elms, and after having dined, resigned myself to all that train of reflection, which the view of so august a monument must naturally excite.

Since the decease of Marechal Saxe Chambord is going fast to decay. Louis the fourteenth made several visits to it for the pleasure of the chace; but his successor totally neglected it, and many hundred thousand livres would now be requisite to render it fit to receive a sovereign. Its immense magnitude which requires continual repairs, will accelerate its downfall, and motives of œconomy probably produce, in some future time its entire demolition.

The city of Blois is meanly built, and many of the houses may dispute antiquity with the castle. It lies on the declivity of a hill along the northern bank of the river, and is joined to a considerable suburb on the opposite side by a modern bridge.

bridge. No language can paint in colours sufficiently glowing the beauty of the Loire, or the fertility of the country through which it flows. The extreme poverty and misery of the peasants, amid a delicious paradise producing luxuriantly all the delicacies and elegancies of life, impresses with mingled pity, wonder and indignation. I behold much magnificence, and more distress; one Chateau, surrounded with a thousand wretched hamlets; a luxury the most studied and enervate, contrasted with beggary and nakedness among the people; a gaiety, an enjoyment, a softness and urbanity universally characteristic of every rank, and to which it is impossible to refuse attachment and admiration.

To-morrow morning I continue my progress slowly along the Loire. Meanwhile farewell!

Tours, Tuesday, 21st of May, 1776.

**T**HE road from Blois to this city is one of the most agreeable in France, along the high dyke of the river. Hills, whose sides are covered with vines, forests, amid which appear spires and villas, or wide plains cultivated with the most assiduous industry, continually diversify and enliven the scene.

I stop'd during more than two hours to view the castle of Chaumont. It is built on a high promontory about five leagues below Blois, on the southern bank of the Loire, and commanding a most extensive prospect. The pile is Gothic, and was constructed about the middle of the fifteenth century by the Lords of the house of Amboise. The Cardinal of that name, the virtuous and incorrupt minister of Louis the twelfth, was born there, and the devices of the family are yet distinctly traced on the great towers of the edifice.



edifice. They are two letters **TC** and a volcano ; this, by a sort of pun which in that age was much admir'd, formed the word " Chau-Mont." Henry the second presented it to his mistress Diana de Poitiers, so celebrated in the annals of France. She beautified and enlarg'd it ; the hunting horn, one of her emblems, appears in many parts of the building. On the death of her royal lover in 1559, Catherine of Medicis, who had long envied her the possession, rather compelled than requested the duchess to renounce it in her favour ; but by an act of generosity worthy a queen, she gave her in return the palace of Chenonceaux - sur - Cher. Soon after the death of Catherine, it fell into the Viscount de Sardini's hands, a Lucquese nobleman, who had married a lady of the house of Limeüil, distantly allied to that princess by blood. His descendants are now extinct. — Exactly opposite to it, about a mile from the Loire stands the castle of Onzain, in which Louis prince of Condé, slain at

Jarnac, was imprisoned by Catherine of Medicis after the battle of Dreux, and during the siege of Orleans.

I arrived at Amboise the same evening. The town is mean and ill built, but has been rendered famous in story by the conspiracy in 1560, which opened the fatal wars of Calvinism and Coligni. The castle is situated on a craggy rock, extremely difficult of access, and the sides of which descend almost perpendicular. At its foot flows the Loire, which is divided into two streams by a small island. I am not surprized that the duke of Guise, in the apprehension of an insurrection among the Hugonots, chose to remove Francis the second to this fortress, as to a place of perfect safety. Only two detached parts of the ancient Chateau now remain, one of which was erected by Charles the eighth, and the other by Francis the first. It is unnecessary to remind you that the former of those princes was born and expired here. From the hill behind the castle, is beheld an-

other of those luxurious and enchanting landscapes, which these provinces of France continually exhibit, and where the eye wanders delighted amid a rich profusion of natural beauties.

I went the ensuing day to Chanteloup, the palace of Monsieur de Choiseul, about a mile from Amboise. Neither the situation nor the exposure are eligible. It commands a very limited prospect, and the Loire, though at so inconsiderable a distance, is scarce seen even from the upper apartments. The rooms which I was permitted to view, though splendid, were destitute of paintings or marbles, and fell far short of the magnificent ideas I had been taught to preconceive. The Duke has spent immense sums on this palace, and is at present employed in the erection of additional chambers, which will surpass those already finished in grandeur and elegance.

I continued my journey to this city. Tours is built in a fine plain on the southern bank of the Loire. The surrounding

rounding country surpasses all I have yet seen in fertility and luxuriance, and every eminence within several miles of the place is occupied by convents or villas which pleasure or superstition have erected. Among the monasteries is the celebrated one of Marmoutier, from whence Isabella queen of Charles the sixth was carried off by the duke of Burgundy, in 1417.

I made an excursion yesterday to Loches, which is ten leagues distant, through a delicious plain watered by the Cher, the Indre, and a number of rivulets that fertilize the meadows through which they run. The castle of Loches is exceedingly renowned in the history of France, and was in former ages the usual place of confinement for prisoners of the highest quality. Its origin remounts to the most remote antiquity, nor does tradition itself pretend to ascertain its founder, or the æra of its construction. Successive sovereigns enlarged, rebuilt and fortified it. Charles the seventh frequently held his court and residence there during the former



former part of his reign ; and the duke of Alençon, a prince of the blood, was detained there a captive by that monarch's order, on account of his treasonable practices for the introduction of the English into the kingdom. — In one of the apartments, is the iron cage in which Louis the eleventh confined the Cardinal de la Balue more than nine years. It is an inhuman engine of punishment. The form is square, and the diameter not above eleven feet. He was at length released in 1481, at the intercession of the sovereign Pontiff, and during the state of debility which preceded the king's death.

I went to view the chamber where the perfidious Ludovico Sforza the Moor was imprisoned by Louis the twelfth, from the year 1500 to 1510. It is a large apartment vaulted, and in that century not improper for the confinement of a sovereign prince. One window, secured by three gratings of iron, admits light into the room, and in the midst of summer the rays of the sun enter through

it about the hour of noon for a few minutes. Exactly opposite to the window on the wall, are distinctly traced the remains of a dial or meridian, upon which the sun beams played; and which, as long and uniform tradition relates, was engraven by the hand of Sforza to enliven his hours of solitude. Over the chimney is the figure of a head cover'd with a casque, supposed to be his. The walls and roof are likewise covered with characters and inscriptions now rendered illegible by the lapse of time.

I quitted this chamber, and descended with my guide by the light of a torch into the "Oubliettes," or subterranean dungeons. They are Labyrinths hollowed into the earth, of a vast extent and totally destitute of light. The air itself was so moist and unwholesome, that the flambeau was almost extinguished by it. The man who attended me, made me observe in many places of the incumbent rock, round holes through which the wretched victims destined to perish in these caverns were

were let down. Doors of massy iron close up the entrance, and preclude all possibility of succour or escape. I was glad to leave these dismal abodes of darkness and horror, to revisit the chearful day.—

The greater part of the castle is now in a state of ruin. It is notwithstanding still made use of to confine persons accused of state crimes, and there is at present a gentleman shut up for unknown causes, who has been here more than three years.

In the church, before the high altar, is interr'd the celebrated Agnes Soreille, mistress to Charles the seventh. The monument is composed of black marble, and on it is her effigy cut in white alabaster. If it may be supposed to resemble her person, she was feminine and delicate to the utmost degree of which the human body is susceptible. The face is perfectly correspondent to the other parts, and conveys an idea of uncommon loveliness mixed with exquisite fragility. Her hands which are joined in prayer are models of symmetry and proportion. Round her head is a

broad fillet enriched with pearls, and a sort of necklace composed of the same ornaments falls on her bosom. She reposes on an embroider'd cushion; her dress is simple, modest, concealing her limbs from view, and at her feet are two lambs emblematical of her name, Agnes. Time which respects not even beauty, has begun to injure and deface the figure and the tomb in many parts. I hung over it with extreme satisfaction during some minutes, in silence. It was not merely the consciousness of the charms she once possessed that detained and affected me:—the magnanimous heroism which actuated her conduct, and which she infus'd into her lover sinking under the pressure of his enemies, render her memory deservedly dear to every mind where patriotism is not extinct. Among the many favourites of princes whom history has preserved from oblivion, none appears to have been more worthy a monarch's attachment, none so deservedly consecrated to eternal remembrance. You will recollect I doubt not, the verses of

3 Francis



Francis the first in her honour, which particularly allude to her efforts to inspire Charles the seventh with fortitude and courage against the English, the invaders of his dominions.—A thousand fables and traditions respecting her are yet preserved among the inhabitants of Loches : her beauty, her liberality, and her empire over the king form the principal subjects. I listened to them all with extreme satisfaction ; and went to look at the tower, which is called “ La Tour de la belle Agnes,” and in which, as my conductor assured me with great simplicity, Charles used from motives of jealousy, to lock her up when he went to the chace.—It is certain she resided frequently at Beaulieu, a little town only divided from Loches by the river Indre, and where are still seen the remains of a Chateau which belonged to her. As she expir’d at the abbey of Jumieges in Normandy, her body was brought by her express command to this church, to which during her lifetime she had made very ample donations.

Louis

Louis the eleventh, though he neither honour'd his father's memory, nor respected Agnes, whom it is pretended he once struck at Chinon in Touraine, yet protected her remains, and refused permission to the canons, who by an act of ingratitude to their benefactress petitioned for the removal and demolition of her tomb.

I had always read and been informed, that Ludovico Sforza duke of Milan was likewise buried in the chancel of the same church, under a plate of copper. All the French writers—even their best historians assert it as an incontestable fact.—There is notwithstanding nothing more false, and it is one of those many errors which long prescription has sanctified. The plate of copper indeed exists; but one of the priests obligingly read to me the inscription on it, which is to the memory of a private family. A portrait of a warrior kneeling and in prayer, which has been always shewn as Sforza's figure, the same person assured me is that of the duke of Epernon.—No traces of any such interment

interment are to be found among the records of the church, though that of Agnes Soreille, anterior by sixty years yet exists.——I must own this contradiction to so received an opinion may appear extraordinary;—but how many historical narrations depend upon as dubious and uncertain a basis!

I am just returned from the castle of Plessez-les-Tours, so famous for the death of Louis the eleventh. Do you remember Cominès's minute and terrifying picture of that monarch's exit?—I felt a secret horror as I entered the court and survey'd the walls once covered with iron spikes, where a continual guard kept watch during the last, sad hours of the guilty and expiring monarch. It is only half a league from this city, in a plain surrounded by woods, at a little distance from the Loire. The building is yet handsome though compos'd of brick, and now converted to purposes of commerce. In the chapel, on the right hand of the high altar, is a masterly and beautiful portrait

portrait of Louis himself. He is clad in complete armour. Within his left arm, reposing on his breast, is a standard, and with his right hand he takes off his helmet, in act of salutation to the Virgin and her infant. His harsh and unpleasing features are softened into a smile of pleasure and complacency. He seems to extend his left hand towards the child, whose eye is fix'd on his with eagerness. These indications of tenderness have given room to suppose, that under the figures of Mary and Jesus, are designed Charlotte of Savoy his queen, and Charles the eighth his son. Her habit which is regal, the diadem on her brow, and more than all, a resemblance between the infant and the king which is strikingly evident, confirm strongly this supposition.

Though Tours is at present an unpleasant and ill built place, it will probably be greatly changed in a few years. A very noble bridge of fifteen arches is already constructed across the river, and a street



street planned which will intersect the whole city. These alterations will prodigiously embellish it.

My journey begins now to draw towards its termination. You will yet hear once or twice from Yours, &c.

Mans,

Mans, Tuesday, 28th of May, 1776.

**I**T is with regret I find myself at a distance from the banks of the Loire, along which I have wander'd with so sensible a pleasure. The beauty of the country on either side, the number of magnificent edifices reflected in its surface, the solemn majesty of its course amid islands, woods, and delicious plains, or under high and hanging rocks, conspire to awaken at this enchanting season sentiments of extreme delight.

At Langeais about seven leagues from Tours, I stop'd to examine the remains of the castle. They are yet noble, though decayed and ruinous. It is rendered celebrated in history by the nuptials of Anne of Bretagne with Charles the eighth, which were solemnized there in 1488. I arriv'd at Saumur the same evening. You may imagine that I could not find myself only five leagues distant from the abbey of Fontevraud, where Henry the second and Richard

Richard the first of England are interred, without a desire to visit the place. It is situated in a hollow valley near the confines of Anjou towards Touraine. Rocky hills rise behind it, and thick woods conceal it almost entirely from view. An air of melancholy and silent sequestration reigns on all sides, peculiarly characteristic of, and suitable to the gloomy devotion of monastic life. As I walked under the high and venerable rows of elm in the gardens of the convent, it was impossible not to feel in some degree those solemn and awful sensations which these religious solitudes naturally inspire.—The abbey was founded in 1096 by Robert d'Arbrissel. Its reputation for sanctity, and its vicinity to the city of Chinon where Henry the second expir'd, were probably the chief causes of his being interr'd there, since none of his progenitors the Counts of Anjou had chosen it as their place of burial. You will remember that sentiments of penitence and contrition for his filial disobedience, induced Richard to  
order

order in his dying moments, that his body should be laid at the feet of his father. Eleanor of Aquitain, wife of the one and mother of the other prince, reposes in the same tomb ; as do likewise Jane Countess of Provence and Queen of Sicily daughter to Henry the second, and Elizabeth d'Angoulesme widow of John King of England.—The figures of all these sovereigns are executed in stone, upon the monument: but as it is at present enclosed within the grate, in that part of the choir where the Abbess and Nuns assemble for public devotion, no interest or intreaties could possibly procure me admittance into this sacred partition ; and I was consequently prevented from studying it either so closely, or with that minute attention which I desir'd. Four solemn Requiems and services are said every year for the repose of the souls of these princes, and the tomb was repaired and beautified in 1638 by order of the Abbess.

Fontevraud,



Fontevraud, besides its high antiquity, has been ever considered as one of the most honorary and important ecclesiastical benefices in France. Many princesses of the blood have successively governed it. The revenues are immense. The number of religious of both sexes under the Abbess's direction amount to more than two hundred, and her authority both temporal and spiritual is exceedingly extensive.

I returned to Saumur at night, and left it again last Saturday. The town is small, but pleasantly situated on the Loire, across which is a long bridge continued through a number of islands. It was anciently a most important pass over the river, and of consequence frequently and fiercely disputed by either party during the civil wars in the sixteenth century. The fortifications are of prodigious strength, and Henry the fourth, in the reconciliation which took place between him and Henry the third near Tours in 1589, demanded Saumur as one of the cities of safety to be delivered him. The castle overlooks

the town and river. It is built on a lofty eminence, and is now only valuable as a state prison, where persons of rank are confined. The Kings of Sicily and Dukes of Anjou of the second line, who sprung from John and Philip of Valois, frequently resided there, as it constituted a part of their Angevin dominions or Appennage. It has yet a venerable and magnificent appearance.

The distance from Saumur to Angers is about thirteen leagues, the greater part along the bank of the Loire. Anjou appears to me not to yield in fertility or beauty to any province of the kingdom. Wines of the most delicious and exquisite flavour are produced in it. That of Champigny, a little village near Fontevraud, is particularly admir'd.—I made a stay of two days in Angers. The city stands in a plain, and is divided into “La

“ haute” and “La basse ville” by the river Mayenne, which winds through meadows, and is lost in the Loire five miles below the place. The castle was

built by St. Louis, about the middle of the thirteenth century. The walls, fosses, and numerous towers which yet subsist, evince its former magnificence; and its situation in the center of the city, on a rock overhanging the river, conduces to diffuse over it an air of kingly grandeur, though sunk in decay. It was the principal residence of the Kings of Sicily, as Dukes of Anjou, but is at present in a state of complete and total ruin. The cathedral is a venerable structure, and though it has undergone many alterations in the course of ages since its construction, the architecture is singular and merits study. Here sleeps with her ancestors the renown'd Margaret daughter of René King of Sicily, and Queen of Henry the sixth of England. She expir'd, after her many intrepid but ineffectual efforts to replace her husband on the throne, at the castle of Dampierre in Anjou in 1482. The English historians seem never to have follow'd this illustrious Princess into her retreat, after Louis the eleventh had ran-

from'd her from Edward the fourth, and procur'd her release from the Tower of London. She was the favourite child of René, who renounc'd all his claims on the provinces of Anjou and Lorraine, to obtain her freedom. Under his protection she remained at Aix in Provence, till his death necessitated her to return into the Angevin territories. She was receiv'd by an antient gentleman nam'd Vignole, who had been long in her father's service, and afforded her an asylum. Henry Earl of Richmond who afterwards triumphed at Bosworth, and was then a fugitive in Bretagne, came from Vannes to visit her and demand her counsels. She urged him to his attempt against Richard the third, though she did not survive to be a witness of its success. No remains of that commanding beauty, of those numerous attractions which she had once possess'd, accompanied her in the decline of life. A French writer has drawn the portrait of Margaret when near her end; it impresses with mingled



horror and compassion. You will not recognize the Queen describ'd by our historians in such enchanting colours.

——“Son sang corrompu par tant de  
 “noires agitations, devint comme une  
 “poison qui infecta toutes les parties  
 “qu’il devoit nourrir : sa peau secha  
 “jusqu’ à s’en aller en poussiere ; son  
 “estomac se retrecit, et ses yeux aussi  
 “creux que s’ils eussent été enfoncés avec  
 “violence, perdirent tout le feu qui avoit  
 “servi si long temps d’interprete aux  
 “grands sentimens de son ame.”

Angers is of a very considerable size, but the buildings and streets are almost as mean and antient as those of Bourges. The walls with which John king of England surrounded it in 1214, remain nearly entire, and are of a prodigious circumference.

I slept at La Fleche last night. It is a pretty town on the confines of Anjou. In the church which belong'd to the Jesuits, are the hearts of Henry the fourth and Mary of Medecis, which were deposit-

ed there in consequence of their express command. I enter'd the province of Maine this morning. It is ten leagues from La Fleche to Mans, through a country much enclos'd and finely wooded.—The situation of this city is pleasant and eligible, near the junction of two little rivers which serpentine through a delicious plain. I went to the top of the cathedral, to enjoy one of the finest inland prospects to be imagined. Towards Normandy and Perche it is lost in clouds at a great distance. On the side of Bretagne extends the forest of Mans, where lay the scene of that extraordinary phantom which is said to have appeared to Charles the sixth, and was the principal cause of his unhappy madness. Mans is a small city, but preferable to Angers in it's construction. It constituted together with the province of which it is the capital, a part of our Henry the second's natural and hereditary dominions, which he added to those devolved to him at Stephen king of England's death in right of his mother Matilda,

tilda. In 1216 Philip Augustus reconquer'd it from John, and annex'd it to the crown of France.

I continue my journey in the evening to Alençon. Adieu!

Rouen; Monday, 3d June, 1776.

IT was already late when I quitted Mans, and as Alençon is twelve leagues distant, I was obliged to stop at a little town named "Beaumont-Le-Viscomte," situated on the side of a steep hill, at the foot of which runs a rivulet. A delicious landscape is beheld on all sides, richly cultivated. It is near the confines of Maine and Normandy. I got to Alençon the ensuing morning. The place is of considerable size, and stands in the midst of an extensive plain. The little river Sarte washes its walls. I slept at Seez, an ancient city, and continued my route next day to L'Aigle. It is a small town, but known in history by its castle, of which scarce any traces now remain. Our annals inform us that William the Conqueror frequently resided there in his visits to these his hereditary dominions; and Charles d'Espagne de la Cerda,



da, Constable of France under the reign of John, was surpriz'd and murder'd in it by Charles the Bad King of Nayarre, in the year 1354.

I crossed a considerable tract of country from L'Aigle to Evreux. This latter city is situate in a hollow vale surrounded with lofty hills. The cathedral is a noble structure, though irregular in its external form. I arrived here last Friday. Rouen is too well known and too frequently visited, to render any description of it necessary. The Seine is of unequalled beauty above and below the place, cover'd with little islands overgrown with wood, and flowing under a range of mountains. At one extremity of the city near the river, are yet beheld the remains of the palace which Henry the fifth of England began in 1419, and which was completed under his unfortunate son in 1443. At an inconsiderable distance from it is the "Tour de la Pucelle," in which the Duke of Bedford confin'd the Maid of Orleans previous to her trial and condemnation,

demnation. You will recollect her consequent execution and death. A statue is erected to her on the spot where this cruel sentence was perform'd, and an inscription engraven beneath it in her honour. Who would not die to merit two of the lines which compose it?

——“ Exuit flammis quod mortale,  
 “ Superest gloria nunquam moritura !”——

They exalt her above mortality. They inroll her to the most remote posterity, with the great spirits who in different ages have sacrificed their lives at the shrine of their country. It is the most sublime and enviable tribute which man can pay to virtue.

I went yesterday morning to visit a little priory, call'd “Notre Dame de bonnes Nouvelles,” which is on the southern bank of the Seine. It was founded by William the Conqueror before his successful attempt on the English crown. Tradition says that Matilda his wife being at her devotions in this church, intelligence arrived  
 that

that the duke of Normandy had gained the important battle of Hastings; and from this circumstance it obtained the name it bears at present. Matilda, daughter of Henry the first and mother of Henry the second was buried there; but six hundred years have erased the inscription on her tomb, of which there are now no vestiges discernible. This princess as duchess of Normandy resided at Rouen, and constructed the ancient bridge across the Seine; the ruins yet subsist, though it began to fall as early as the year 1502, and became totally useless before the conclusion of the sixteenth century.

The cathedral is one of the most magnificent monuments of Gothic architecture in France. It was erected under William the Conqueror's reign, and completed in 1063. I tread with reverence among the tombs of kings and princes interred in different parts of the edifice. Here lies Rollo the Dane, founder of the Norman line destin'd to ascend the English throne; a fabled hero lost in the barbarism

barbarism of the times when he flourish'd!  
Two of his descendants, Dukes of Normandy, are buried near him.—The heart of Richard the first King of England, which when dying he ordered to be deposited in the cathedral of Rouen, is on the right hand of the high altar. It was originally preserv'd in a vast shrine of massy silver; but in the extreme distress occasion'd by the want of money to defray the expences of St. Louis's ransom when taken prisoner in Damietta, it was converted to the necessities of the state. His elder brother prince Henry, who died at the castle of Martel in Quercy in 1183, rests on the opposite side. Near these, reposes John duke of Bedford; an illustrious name rever'd even by his enemies, and almost destitute of a blemish if he had not authoriz'd the death of the Maid of Orleans, the deliverer of her country. Behind the altar under a monument of exquisite workmanship, is interr'd the great Cardinal of Amboise, minister to Louis the twelfth, whom France will ever honour



honour while patriotism and integrity are cherished among men. His effigy is represented on the tomb, kneeling and in prayer. I stood long to consider that of Louis de Brezé, Senechal of Normandy and Count de Maulevrier; he died in 1531. The figure of the Count himself extended as dead, is one of the most masterly and beautiful productions which sculpture can exhibit. On one side is the Virgin; on the other appears his widow the celebrated Diana de Poitiers, afterwards the favour'd mistress of Henry the second. She looks down on the body of her husband; grief is marked in her features, and her habit appears to be that of a mourner. The whole is of an execution the most delicate and perfect.

Rouen, though large and commercial is not an elegant city. The streets are almost all narrow, ill pierced and dirty; the buildings, ancient and irregular. It was fortified by St. Louis in 1253, but the walls are now mostly demolished. The environs, more peculiarly the hills  
which

which overlook the Seine are wondrously agreeable, and covered with magnificent villas.

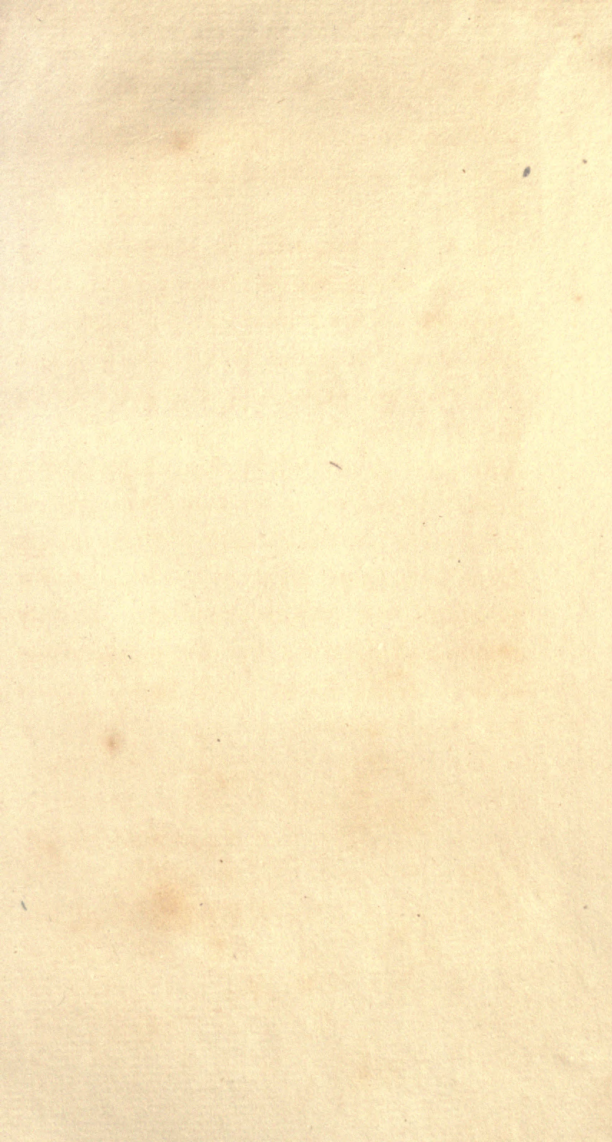
My stay here will be very short. I purpose to repass at Dieppe, and shall probably rejoin you in a few days. — I have compleated the design which I laid down at my departure, that of visiting the unfrequented provinces of France. Throughout my whole tour I have studiously endeavour'd to avoid the ground usually trod by the English in their passage from Calais into Italy, as too well known to afford you any information. It only remains to claim for the whole your candour and indulgence; on that I repose myself, and remain

Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

N. WRAXALL, Jun<sup>r</sup>

F I N I S.









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